

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER II.

THE tall man who had passed Captain Wragge, in the dark, proceeded rapidly along the public walk, struck off across a little waste patch of ground, and entered the open door of the Aldborough Hotel. The light in the passage, falling full on his face as he passed it, proved the truth of Captain Wragge's surmise, and showed the stranger to be Mr. Kirke of the merchant service.

Meeting the landlord in the passage, Mr. Kirke nodded to him with the familiarity of an old customer. "Have you got the paper?" he asked; "I want to look at the visitors' list."

"I have got it in my room, sir," said the landlord, leading the way into a parlour at the back of the house. "Are there any friends of yours staying here, do you think?"

Without replying, the seaman turned to the list, as soon as the newspaper was placed in his hand, and ran his finger down it, name by name. The finger suddenly stopped at this line: "Sea-View Cottage; Mr. Noel Vanstone." Kirke of the merchant service repeated the name to himself; and put down the paper thoughtfully.

"Have you found anybody you know, captain?" asked the landlord.

"I have found a name I know—a name my father used often to speak of in his time. Is this Mr. Vanstone a family man? Do you know if there is a young lady in the house?"

"I can't say, captain. My wife will be here directly; she is sure to know. It must have been some time ago, if your father knew this Mr. Vanstone?"

"It was some time ago. My father knew a subaltern officer of that name, when he was with his regiment in Canada. It would be curious if the person here turned out to be the same man—and if that young lady was his daughter."

"Excuse me, captain—but the young lady seems to hang a little on your mind," said the landlord, with a pleasant smile.

Mr. Kirke looked as if the form which his host's good humour had just taken, was not quite to his mind. He returned abruptly to the subaltern officer and the regiment in Canada.

"That poor fellow's story was as miserable a one as ever I heard," he said, looking back again absently at the visitors' list.

"Would there be any harm in telling it, sir?" asked the landlord. "Miserable or not—a story's a story, when you know it to be true."

Mr. Kirke hesitated. "I hardly think I should be doing right to tell it," he said. "If this man, or any relations of his, are still alive, it is not a story they might like strangers to know. All I can tell you is, that my father was the salvation of that young officer, under very dreadful circumstances. They parted in Canada. My father remained with his regiment: the young officer sold out and returned to England—and from that moment they lost sight of each other. It would be curious if this Vanstone here was the same man. It would be curious——"

He suddenly checked himself, just as another reference to "the young lady" was on the point of passing his lips. At the same moment, the landlord's wife came in; and Mr. Kirke at once transferred his inquiries to the higher authority in the house.

"Do you know anything of this Mr. Vanstone who is down here on the visitors' list?" asked the sailor. "Is he an old man?"

"He's a miserable little creature to look at," replied the landlady—"but he's not old, captain!"

"Then he is not the man I mean. Perhaps, he is the man's son? Has he got any ladies with him?"

The landlady tossed her head, and pursed up her lips disparagingly.

"He has a housekeeper with him," she said. "A middle-aged person—not one of my sort. I dare say I'm wrong—but I don't like a dressy woman in her station of life."

Mr. Kirke began to look puzzled. "I must have made some mistake about the house," he said. "Surely there's a lawn cut octagon-shape at Sea-View Cottage, and a white flag-staff in the middle of the gravel walk?"

"That's not Sea View, sir! It's North Shingles you're talking of. Mr. Bygrave's. His wife and his niece came here, by the coach, to-day. His wife's tall enough to be put in a show, and the worst dressed woman I ever set eyes on. But Miss Bygrave is worth looking at, if I may venture to say so. She's the finest girl, to my mind, we've had at Aldborough for many a long day. I

wonder who they are! Do you know the name, captain?"

"No," said Mr. Kirke, with a shade of disappointment on his dark, weatherbeaten face; "I never heard the name before."

After replying in those words, he rose to take his leave. The landlord vainly invited him to drink a parting glass; the landlady vainly pressed him to stay another ten minutes, and try a cup of tea. He only replied that his sister expected him, and that he must return to the parsonage immediately.

On leaving the hotel, Mr. Kirke set his face westward, and walked inland along the high road, as fast as the darkness would let him.

"Bygrave?" he thought to himself. "Now I know her name, how much am I the wiser for it! If it had been Vanstone, my father's son might have had a chance of making acquaintance with her." He stopped, and looked back in the direction of Aldborough. "What a fool I am!" he burst out suddenly, striking his stick on the ground. "I was forty last birthday." He turned, and went on again faster than ever—his head down; his resolute black eyes searching the darkness on the land as they had searched it many a time on the sea, from the deck of his ship.

After more than an hour's walking, he reached a village, with a primitive little church and parsonage nestled together in a hollow. He entered the house by the back way, and found his sister, the clergyman's wife, sitting alone over her work in the parlour.

"Where is your husband, Lizzie?" he asked, taking a chair in a corner.

"William has gone out to see a sick person. He had just time enough, before he went," she added, with a smile, "to tell me about the young lady; and he declares he will never trust himself at Aldborough with you again, until you are a steady married man." She stopped; and looked at her brother more attentively than she had looked at him yet. "Robert!" she said, laying aside her work, and suddenly crossing the room to him. "You look anxious, you look distressed. William only laughed about your meeting with the young lady. Is it serious? Tell me, what is she like?"

He turned his head away at the question.

She took a stool at his feet, and persisted in looking up at him. "Is it serious, Robert?" she repeated, softly.

Kirke's weatherbeaten face was accustomed to no concealments—it answered for him before he spoke a word. "Don't tell your husband till I am gone," he said, with a roughness quite new in his sister's experience of him. "I know I only deserve to be laughed at—but it hurts me, for all that."

"Hurts you?" she repeated, in astonishment.

"You can't think me half such a fool, Lizzie, as I think myself," pursued Kirke, bitterly. "A man at my age ought to know better. I didn't set eyes on her for as much as a minute altogether; and there I have been, hanging

about the place till after nightfall, on the chance of seeing her again—skulking, I should have called it, if I had found one of my men doing what I have been doing myself. I believe I'm bewitched. She's a mere girl, Lizzie,—I doubt if she's out of her teens—I'm old enough to be her father. It's all one: she stops in my mind in spite of me. I've had her face looking at me, through the pitch darkness, every step of the way to this house; and it's looking at me now—as plain as I see yours, and plainer."

He rose impatiently, and began to walk backwards and forwards in the room. His sister looked after him with surprise, as well as sympathy, expressed in her face. From his boyhood upwards, she had always been accustomed to see him master of himself. Years since, in the failing fortunes of the family, he had been their example and their support. She had heard of him, in the desperate emergencies of a life at sea, when hundreds of his fellow-creatures had looked to his steady self-possession for rescue from close-threatening death—and had not looked in vain. Never, in all her life before, had his sister seen the balance of that calm and equal mind lost, as she saw it lost now.

"How can you talk so unreasonably about your age and yourself?" she said. "There is not a woman alive, Robert, who is good enough for you. What is her name?"

"Bygrave. Do you know it?"

"No. But I might soon make acquaintance with her. If we only had a little time before us; if I could only get to Aldborough and see her—but you are going away to-morrow; your ship sails at the end of the week."

"Thank God for that!" said Kirke, fervently.

"Are you glad to be going away?" she asked, more and more amazed at him.

"Right glad, Lizzie, for my own sake. If I ever get to my senses again, I shall find my way back to them on the deck of my ship. This girl has got between me and my thoughts already: she shan't go a step further, and get between me and my duty. I'm determined on that. Fool as I am, I have sense enough left not to trust myself within easy hail of Aldborough to-morrow morning. I'm good for another twenty miles of walking—and I'll begin my journey back to-night."

His sister started up, and caught him fast by the arm. "Robert!" she exclaimed; "you're not serious? You don't mean to leave us on foot, alone in the dark?"

"It's only saying good-by, my dear, the last thing at night, instead of the first thing in the morning," he answered, with a smile. "Try and make allowances for me, Lizzie. My life has been passed at sea; and I'm not used to having my mind upset in this way. Men ashore are used to it; men ashore can take it easy. I can't. If I stopped here, I shouldn't rest. If I waited till to-morrow, I should only be going back to have another look at her. I don't want to feel more ashamed of myself than I do already."

I want to fight my way back to my duty and myself, without stopping to think twice about it. Darkness is nothing to me—I'm used to darkness. I have got the high road to walk on, and I can't lose my way. Let me go, Lizzie! The only sweetheart I have any business with, at my age, is my ship. Let me get back to her!"

His sister still kept her hold of his arm, and still pleaded with him to stay till the morning. He listened to her with perfect patience and kindness—but she never shook his determination for an instant.

"What am I to say to William?" she pleaded. "What will he think, when he comes back, and finds you gone?"

"Tell him I have taken the advice he gave us, in his sermon last Sunday. I have turned my back on the world, the flesh, and the devil."

"How can you talk so, Robert! And the boys too—you promised not to go without bidding the boys good-by."

"That's true. I made my little nephews a promise; and I'll keep it." He kicked off his shoes, as he spoke, on the mat outside the door. "Light me up-stairs, Lizzie; I'll bid the two boys good-by without waking them."

She saw the uselessness of resisting him any longer; and, taking the candle, went before him up-stairs.

The boys—both young children—were sleeping together in the same bed. The youngest was his uncle's favourite, and was called by his uncle's name. He lay peacefully asleep, with a rough little toy ship hugged fast in his arms. Kirke's eyes softened as he stole on tiptoe to the child's side, and kissed him with the gentleness of a woman. "Poor little man!" said the sailor, tenderly. "He is as fond of his ship as I was at his age. I'll cut him out a better one when I come back. Will you give me my nephew one of these days, Lizzie, and will you let me make a sailor of him?"

"Oh, Robert, if you were only married and happy, as I am!"

"The time has gone by, my dear. I must make the best of it as I am, with my little nephew there to help me."

He left the room. His sister's tears fell fast as she followed him into the parlour. "There is something so forlorn and dreadful in your leaving us like this," she said. "Shall I go to Aldborough to-morrow, Robert, and try if I can get acquainted with her, for your sake?"

"No!" he replied. "Let her be. If it's ordered that I am to see that girl again, I *shall* see her. Leave it to the future, and you leave it right." He put on his shoes, and took up his hat and stick. "I won't over-walk myself," he said, cheerfully. "If the coach doesn't overtake me on the road, I can wait for it where I stop to breakfast. Dry your eyes, my dear; and give me a kiss."

She was like her brother, in features and complexion; and she had a touch of her brother's

spirit—she dashed away the tears, and took her leave of him bravely.

"I shall be back in a year's time," said Kirke, falling into his old sailor-like way, at the door. "I'll bring you a China shawl, Lizzie, and a chest of tea for your store-room. Don't let the boys forget me; and don't think I'm doing wrong to leave you in this way. I know I'm doing right. God bless you and keep you, my dear—and your husband, and your children! Good-by!"

He stooped, and kissed her. She ran to the door to look after him. A puff of air extinguished the candle—and the black night shut him out from her in an instant.

Three days afterwards, the first-class merchantman, *DELIVERANCE*—Kirke, commander—sailed from London for the China Sea.

CHAPTER III.

THE threatening of storm and change passed away with the night. When morning rose over Aldborough, the sun was master in the blue heaven, and the waves were rippling gaily under the summer breeze.

At an hour when no other visitors to the watering-place were yet astir, the indefatigable Wragge appeared at the door of North Shingles Villa, and directed his steps northward, with a neatly-bound copy of Joyce's "Scientific Dialogues" in his hand. Arriving at the waste ground beyond the houses, he descended to the beach, and opened his book. The interview of the past night had sharpened his perception of the difficulties to be encountered in the coming enterprise. He was now doubly determined to try the characteristic experiment at which he had hinted in his letter to Magdalen: and to concentrate on himself—in the character of a remarkably well-informed man—the entire interest and attention of the formidable Mrs. Lecount.

Having taken his dose of ready-made science (to use his own expression) the first thing in the morning, on an empty stomach, Captain Wragge joined his small family circle at breakfast-time, inflated with information for the day. He observed that Magdalen's face showed plain signs of a sleepless night. She made no complaint: her manner was composed, and her temper perfectly under control. Mrs. Wragge—refreshed by some thirteen consecutive hours of uninterrupted repose—was in excellent spirits, and up at heel (for a wonder) with both shoes. She brought with her into the room several large sheets of tissue paper, cut crisply into mysterious and many-varying forms, which immediately provoked from her husband the short and sharp question, "What have you got there?"

"Patterns, captain," said Mrs. Wragge, in timidly conciliating tones. "I went shopping in London, and bought an Oriental Cashmere Robe. It cost a deal of money; and I'm going to try and save, by making it myself. I've got my patterns, and my dressmaking directions written out as plain as print. I'll be

very tidy, captain; I'll keep in my own corner, if you'll please to give me one; and whether my head buzzes, or whether it don't, I'll sit straight at my work all the same."

"You will do your work," said the captain, sternly, "when you know who you are, who I am, and who that young lady is—not before. Show me your shoes! Good. Show me your cap! Good. Make the breakfast."

When breakfast was over, Mrs. Wragge received her orders to retire to an adjoining room, and to wait there until her husband came to release her. As soon as her back was turned, Captain Wragge at once resumed the conversation which had been suspended, by Magdalen's own desire, on the preceding night. The questions he now put to her, all related to the subject of her visit in disguise to Noel Vanstone's house. They were the questions of a thoroughly clear-headed man—short, searching, and straight to the point. In less than half an hour's time, he had made himself acquainted with every incident that had happened in Vauxhall Walk.

The conclusions which the captain drew, after gaining his information, were clear and easily stated.

On the adverse side of the question, he expressed his conviction that Mrs. Lecount had certainly detected her visitor to be disguised; that she had never really left the room, though she might have opened and shut the door; and that on both the occasions, therefore, when Magdalen had been betrayed into speaking in her own voice, Mrs. Lecount had heard her. On the favourable side of the question, he was perfectly satisfied that the painted face and eyelids, the wig, and the padded cloak had so effectually concealed Magdalen's identity, that she might, in her own person, defy the house-keeper's closest scrutiny, so far as the matter of appearance was concerned. The difficulty of deceiving Mrs. Lecount's ears, as well as her eyes, was, he readily admitted, not so easily to be disposed of. But looking to the fact that Magdalen, on both the occasions when she had forgotten herself, had spoken in the heat of anger, he was of opinion that her voice had every reasonable chance of escaping detection—if she carefully avoided all outbursts of temper for the future, and spoke in those more composed and ordinary tones of her voice, which Mrs. Lecount had not yet heard. Upon the whole, the captain was inclined to pronounce the prospect hopeful, if one serious obstacle were cleared away at the outset—that obstacle being nothing less than the presence on the scene of action of Mrs. Wragge.

To Magdalen's surprise, when the course of her narrative brought her to the story of the ghost, Captain Wragge listened with the air of a man who was more annoyed than amused by what he heard. When she had done, he plainly told her that her unlucky meeting on the stairs of the lodging-house with Mrs. Wragge was, in his

opinion, the most serious of all the accidents that had happened in Vauxhall Walk.

"I can deal with the difficulty of my wife's stupidity," he said, "as I have often dealt with it before. I can hammer her new identity into her head, but I can't hammer the ghost out of it. We have no security that the woman in the grey cloak and poke bonnet may not come back to her recollection, at the most critical time, and under the most awkward circumstances. In plain English, my dear girl, Mrs. Wragge is a pitfall under our feet at every step we take."

"If we are aware of the pitfall," said Magdalen, "we can take our measures for avoiding it. What do you propose?"

"I propose," replied the captain, "the temporary removal of Mrs. Wragge. Speaking purely in a pecuniary point of view, I can't afford a total separation from her. You have often read of very poor people being suddenly enriched, by legacies reaching them from remote and unexpected quarters? Mrs. Wragge's case, when I married her, was one of these. An elderly female relative shared the favours of fortune, on that occasion, with my wife; and if I only keep up domestic appearances, I happen to know that Mrs. Wragge will prove a second time profitable to me, on that elderly relative's death. But for this circumstance, I should probably long since have transferred my wife to the care of society at large—in the agreeable conviction that if I didn't support her, somebody else would. Although I can't afford to take this course, I see no objection to having her comfortably boarded and lodged out of our way, for the time being—say, at a retired farm-house, in the character of a lady in infirm mental health. You would find the expense trifling; I should find the relief unutterable. What do you say? Shall I pack her up at once, and take her away by the next coach?"

"No!" replied Magdalen, firmly. "The poor creature's life is hard enough already; I won't help to make it harder. She was affectionately and truly kind to me when I was ill—and I won't allow her to be shut up among strangers while I can help it. The risk of keeping her here is only one risk more. I will face it, Captain Wragge—if you won't."

"Think twice," said the captain, gravely, "before you decide on keeping Mrs. Wragge."

"Once is enough," rejoined Magdalen. "I won't have her sent away."

"Very good," said the captain, resignedly. "I never interfere with questions of sentiment. But I have a word to say, on my own behalf. If my services are to be of any use to you, I can't have my hands tied at starting. This is serious. I won't trust my wife and Mrs. Lecount together. I'm afraid, if you're not—and I make it a condition that, if Mrs. Wragge stops here, she keeps her room. If you think her health requires it, you can take her for a walk early in the morning or late in the evening—but you must never trust her out with the servant, and never trust her out

by herself. I put the matter plainly: it is too important to be trifled with. What do you say—yes, or no?"

"I say, yes," replied Magdalen, after a moment's consideration. "On the understanding that I am to take her out walking as you propose."

Captain Wragge bowed, and recovered his suavity of manner. "What are our plans?" he inquired. "Shall we start our enterprise this afternoon? Are you ready for your introduction to Mrs. Lecount and her master?"

"Quite ready."

"Good, again. We will meet them on the parade, at their usual hour for going out—two o'clock. It is not twelve yet. I have two hours before me—just time enough to fit my wife into her new Skin. The process is absolutely necessary, to prevent her compromising us with the servant. Don't be afraid about the results; Mrs. Wragge has had a copious selection of assumed names hammered into her head in the course of her matrimonial career. It is merely a question of hammering hard enough—nothing more. I think we have settled everything now. Is there anything I can do before two o'clock? Have you any employment for the morning?"

"No," said Magdalen. "I shall go back to my own room, and try to rest."

"You had a disturbed night, I am afraid?" said the captain, politely opening the door for her.

"I fell asleep once or twice," she answered, carelessly. "I suppose my nerves are a little shaken. The bold black eyes of that man who stared so rudely at me yesterday evening, seemed to be looking at me again in my dreams. If we see him to-day, and if he annoys me any more, I must trouble you to speak to him. We will meet here again at two o'clock. Don't be hard with Mrs. Wragge; teach her what she must learn, as tenderly as you can."

With those words she left him, and went upstairs.

She laid down on her bed, with a heavy sigh, and tried to sleep. It was useless. The dull weariness of herself which now possessed her, was not the weariness which finds its remedy in repose. She rose again, and sat by the window, looking out listlessly over the sea.

A weaker nature than hers would not have felt the shock of Frank's desertion as she had felt it—as she was feeling it still. A weaker nature would have found refuge in indignation and comfort in tears. The passionate strength of Magdalen's love clung desperately to the sinking wreck of its own delusion—clung, until she tore herself from it, by main force of will. All that her native pride, her keen sense of wrong could do, was to shame her from dwelling on the thoughts which still caught their breath of life from the undying devotion of the past; which still perversely ascribed Frank's heartless farewell to any cause but the inborn baseness of the man who had written it. The woman never

lived yet who could cast a true love out of her heart, because the object of that love was unworthy of her. All she can do is to struggle against it in secret—to sink in the contest, if she is weak; to win her way through it, if she is strong, by a process of self-laceration, which is of all moral remedies applied to a woman's nature the most dangerous and the most desperate; of all moral changes the change that is surest to mark her for life. Magdalen's strong nature had sustained her through the struggle; and the issue of it had left her—what she now was.

After sitting by the window for nearly an hour—her eyes looking mechanically at the view; her mind empty of all impressions, and conscious of no thoughts—she shook off the strange waking stupor that possessed her, and rose to prepare herself for the serious business of the day.

She went to the wardrobe, and took down from the pegs two bright, delicate muslin dresses which had been made for summer wear at Combe-Raven, a year since, and which had been of too little value to be worth selling when she parted with her other possessions. After placing these dresses, side by side on the bed, she looked into the wardrobe once more. It only contained one other summer dress—the plain alpaca gown which she had worn during her memorable interview with Noel Vanstone and Mrs. Lecount. This she left in its place; resolving not to wear it, less from any dread that the housekeeper might recognise a pattern too quiet to be noticed, and too common to be remembered, than from the conviction that it was neither gay enough nor becoming enough for the purpose. After taking a plain white muslin scarf, a pair of light grey kid gloves, and a garden-hat of Tuscan straw, from the drawers of the wardrobe, she locked it, and put the key carefully in her pocket.

Instead of at once proceeding to dress herself, she sat idly looking at the two muslin gowns; careless which she wore, and yet inconsistently hesitating which to choose. "What does it matter!" she said to herself, with a reckless laugh; "I am equally worthless in my own estimation, whichever I put on." She shuddered, as if the sound of her own laughter had startled her; and abruptly caught up the dress which lay nearest to her hand. Its colours were blue and white—the shade of blue which best suited her fair complexion. She hurriedly put on the gown, without going near her looking-glass. For the first time in her life, she shrank from meeting the reflexion of herself—except for a moment, when she arranged her hair under her garden-hat, leaving the glass again immediately. She drew her scarf over her shoulders, and fitted on her gloves, with her back to the toilet-table. "Shall I paint?" she asked herself, feeling instinctively that she was turning pale. "The rouge is still left in my box. It can't make my face more false than it is already." She looked

round towards the glass, and again turned away from it. "No!" she said. "I have Mrs. Lecount to face, as well as her master. No paint." After consulting her watch, she left the room, and went down stairs again. It wanted ten minutes only of two o'clock.

Captain Wragge was waiting for her in the parlour—respectable in a frock-coat, a stiff summer cravat, and a high white hat; specklessly and cheerfully rural, in a buff waistcoat, grey trousers, and gaiters to match. His collars were higher than ever, and he carried a bran-new camp-stool in his hand. Any tradesman in England who had seen him at that moment, would have trusted him on the spot.

"Charming!" said the captain, paternally surveying Magdalen when she entered the room. "So fresh and cool! A little too pale, my dear, and a great deal too serious. Otherwise perfect. Try if you can smile."

"When the time comes for smiling," said Magdalen, bitterly, "trust my dramatic training for any change of face that may be necessary. Where is Mrs. Wragge?"

"Mrs. Wragge has learnt her lesson," replied the captain, "and is rewarded by my permission to sit at work in her own room. I sanction her new fancy for dressmaking, because it is sure to absorb all her attention, and to keep her at home. There is no fear of her finishing the Oriental Robe 'in a hurry'—for there is no mistake in the process of making it which she is not certain to commit. She will sit incubating her gown—pardon the expression—like a hen over an addled egg. I assure you her new whim relieves me. Nothing could be more convenient under existing circumstances."

He strutted away to the window—looked out—and beckoned to Magdalen to join him. "There they are!" he said, and pointed to the parade.

Mr. Noel Vanstone slowly walked by, as she looked, dressed in a complete suit of old-fashioned nankeen. It was apparently one of the days when the state of his health was at the worst. He leaned on Mrs. Lecount's arm, and was protected from the sun by a light umbrella which she held over him. The housekeeper—dressed to perfection, as usual, in a quiet lavender-coloured summer gown, a black mantilla, an unassuming straw bonnet, and a crisp blue veil—escorted her invalid master with the tenderest attention; sometimes directing his notice respectfully to the various objects of the sea view; sometimes, bending her head in graceful acknowledgment of the courtesy of passing strangers on the parade, who stepped aside to let the invalid pass by. She produced a visible effect among the idlers on the beach. They looked after her, with unanimous interest; and exchanged confidential nods of approval which said as plainly as words could have expressed it:—"A very domestic person! a truly superior woman!"

Captain Wragge's parti-coloured eyes followed Mrs. Lecount with a steady, distrustful atten-

tion. "Tough work for us, *there*," he whispered in Magdalen's ear; "tougher work than you think, before we turn that woman out of her place."

"Wait," said Magdalen, quietly. "Wait, and see."

She walked to the door. The captain followed her without making any further remark. "I'll wait till you're married," he thought to himself—"not a moment longer, offer me what you may."

At the house door, Magdalen addressed him again.

"We will go that way," she said, pointing southward—"then turn, and meet them, as they come back."

Captain Wragge signified his approval of the arrangement: and followed Magdalen to the garden gate. As she opened it to pass through, her attention was attracted by a lady, with a nursery-maid and two little boys behind her, loitering on the path outside the garden wall. The lady started, looked eagerly, and smiled to herself, as Magdalen came out. Curiosity had got the better of Kirke's sister—and she had come to Aldborough for the express purpose of seeing Miss Bygrave.

Something in the shape of the lady's face, something in the expression of her dark eyes reminded Magdalen of the merchant-captain whose uncontrolled admiration had annoyed her on the previous evening. She instantly returned the stranger's scrutiny by a frowning, ungracious look. The lady coloured, paid the look back with interest, and slowly walked on.

"A hard, bold, bad girl," thought Kirke's sister. "What could Robert be thinking of to admire her? I am almost glad he is gone. I hope and trust he will never set eyes on Miss Bygrave again."

"What bores the people are here!" said Magdalen to Captain Wragge. "That woman was even ruder than the man last night. She is like him in the face. I wonder who she is?"

"I'll find out directly," said the captain. "We can't be too cautious about strangers." He at once appealed to his friends, the boatmen. They were close at hand; and Magdalen heard the questions and answers plainly.

"How are you all, this morning?" said Captain Wragge, in his easy jocular way. "And how's the wind? Nor'-west and by west, is it? Very good. Who is that lady?"

"That's Mrs. Strickland, sir."

"Ay! ay! The clergyman's wife and the captain's sister. Where's the captain to-day?"

"On his way to London, I should think, sir. His ship sails for China, at the end of the week."

China! As that one word passed the man's lips, a pang of the old sorrow struck Magdalen to the heart. Stranger as he was, she began to hate the bare mention of the merchant-captain's name. He had troubled her dreams of the past night—and now, when she was most desperately and recklessly bent on forgetting her old home-

existence, he had been indirectly the cause of recalling her mind to Frank.

"Come!" she said, angrily, to her companion. "What do we care about the man or his ship? Come away."

"By all means," said Captain Wragge. "As long as we don't find friends of the Bygraves, what do we care about anybody?"

They walked on, southwards, for ten minutes or more—then turned and walked back again to meet Noel Vanstone and Mrs. Lecount.

UP AND DOWN IN THE GREAT SUN GARDEN.

GLORIOUS with flowers, a great unexplored garden lies in calm seas under the burning sun. Except Australia, which is so large as to be called a continent, Borneo, lying north of it directly under the equator, and most tropical among tropical lands in the same Pacific seas, is the largest island in the world. It is more than three times as large as Great Britain, and it is by more than three thousand times less known. The greater part of the island south of the equator and on the eastern coast is considered subject to the Dutch, whose settlements are comprised in three provinces. On the northern coast between the sea and a range of Anga-Anga mountains, is Borneo Proper, with the town of Brunei, or Borneo, having the island of Labuan by the head of its bay—an island ceded to this country, in which are coal mines worked for the use of steamers in those Eastern seas. At the other, or western end of Borneo Proper, still on the northern coast of the great island, is Sir James Brooke's province of Saráwak, ceded to this country in 1843.

There was much need of a real traveller in this great island, that lay dimly seen by Europe glowing under the bright tropical sun, and we are very glad, then, now to get a real traveller's book about Borneo from Mr. Spenser St. John,* who, resident officially at the principal city of the island, journeyed towards the south, and in that direction advanced farther than any Malay or European who had been before him. First, he ranged among the tribes planted about Sir James Brooke's territory of Saráwak. Next, he ascended twice to the shoulders and head of the great mountain of Borneo, Kina-Balu, thirteen or fourteen thousand feet high. Lastly, he penetrated deep to the south and south-east of his place of residence, Brunei, the royal city where, as ancient voyagers say, the sultans were wont to hold court, with immense body-guards and displays of barbaric splendour. For ten years, as he lay in the bay, he had looked up to the hills rising and rising southward, innumerable and mysterious, and wondered what manner of region lay beyond them. Neither Malay nor European could solve the mystery; the river Limbang, the outlet from that undiscovered interior, had only been navi-

gated within sight of the sea, where it poured out its waters, which told no secret, from the profundity of forest and the labyrinth of mountains. It was long, however, before he could visit this Cloud-land, so he began with the places and people nearer at hand. He would look at the fauns and satyrs of the garden; the Sea-Dyaks, for example, so called from their familiarity with salt water, though many of them dwell far inland.

These are the warlike people accustomed to take heads, as the Red Indians take scalps, and addicted to plunder. They live in huts between five and six hundred feet long—commodious, clean, and airy. But they have their difficulties. Now and then a village will dwindle away under the influence of an epidemic, and everywhere the snakes are a coiling nuisance, eating pigs and dogs without ceremony, swallowing deer—horns and all—and even supping on late human loiterers in the woods. Until recently, worse than the snakes were the pirates—Dyak or Malay. Mr. St. John met with one of these buccaneers, who, left by his companions on the banks of a river, swam off to a floating island on its way seawards, and became a pilgrim of the waves and winds, his green ship, palm-masted, supplying him with fruit until a vessel picked him up.

There is a spicy breath of Eastern fairyland in the thought of these sailing islets spreading their foliage to the summer breeze, with a noisy, well-provisioned crew of birds and monkeys. Nothing, we suppose, exactly hits the fancy of an alligator, unless it be the leg of a Dyak, and the alligators see most of these floating islets. Alligators in Borneo are sometimes twenty-five feet long. Cats and monkeys are used as the baits for catching them, and in their deep stomachs ominous deposits of jacket-buttons, or the indigestible pigtails of Chinamen, may now and then be found. The great orang-outang, too, as a distant connexion of Sir Oran Haut-ton, is reputed dangerous. But this is a libel, and Mr. St. John could never bring himself to shoot at creatures so very much like the people he had sometimes met. The noble savage is not, on the whole, more remarkable for the amenity of his habits here than elsewhere. Thus, the Millenans, a tribe of Dyak origin, say of themselves, that when they build a huge house on posts, they dig a deep hole to receive the first pile, which is hung suspended over it. A young girl is then put down, the lashings are cut, the enormous timber descends, and the blood of the crushed victim propitiates the evil spirits. Mr. St. John, however, never saw anything bigger than a chicken immolated in this manner.

But it is still doubtful whether human sacrifices do not take place at the burials of respectable men. The Kanowits, another variety of the same race, when a chief dies, are supposed to put his property in a canoe and send it adrift on a stream. But they swindle their dead by keeping the valuables and putting off the ghost with trash. Another strange custom was long hereditary on

* Life in the Forests of the Far East, published by Smith, Elder, and Co.

the banks of the great river Rejang. When a man's child died he sallied forth, killing the first person he met, even were it his own brother. The Sarawak government, however, not being of an antiquarian turn, abolished that old custom. These wild villagers have wilder neighbours in the wandering Pakatan and Punan, who build no permanent dwellings, but run up temporary huts, until they have exhausted the game and fruit of their camping-ground; when they hie them to fresh fields and pastures new. They are industrious collectors of wax, edible birds'-nests, camphor, and rattans. It is said that, living perpetually in the dark forest, and never exposed to the sun, they are fairer than the other inhabitants of Borneo; but Mr. St. John, though he often found their nests in the woods, and slept in them, never came across a tribe. It is by these true foresters that the blowpipe arrow is used, and, being often poisoned, is really a formidable weapon. The Sea-Dyaks, to whose class the Pakatan and Punan belong, salute their infants with music; though one man told the traveller that he had killed his only surviving child, having lost the other by disease, because he could not bear to see it grow up, to love it, and to see it slowly die. Instances have occurred of fathers, when their children were rude and abused them, taking poison in despair. The Sea-Dyaks are garrulous and hospitable; they accustom their brides and bridegrooms betimes to family jars by knocking their heads together three or four times on the wedding-day. They sacrifice a pig when civilised nations not seldom sacrifice a woman; and, when domestic broils occur, what does your sensible Dyak do? Instead of quarrelling and fighting at home, he starts out for a few days until the affair has blown over, and sulks by cutting off other folks' heads in the jungle. "The white men read books," they urge, "we hunt for heads instead;" and they account their way the most conducive to return of cheerfulness. The Kayans are another tribe, curious and little known. Mr. St. John visited them soon after his arrival at Borneo. They dwell on the banks of the stream in verandahed houses, sometimes clustered into towns, are primitive in dress and ideas, and have an inordinate regard for undiluted brandy.

Then, there are Land-Dyaks; their home being the Sarawak interior, to the left of the river, among the hills. They were, at the time of Mr. St. John's visit, gone away to prepare their farms, but the round houses, raised on posts, in which the heads were formerly kept, marked their places of resort, and the old men remained at home cowering over the embers of low fires. The Land-Dyaks are ingenious, industrious, and imitative; they construct elegant little suspension-bridges, and their humour is agricultural. The feet of the Europeans having been washed, the water was kept to manure the soil.

The island of Borneo, it should be premised, extending, with its parasite group, through eleven degrees of longitude and ten of latitude, contains two climates—that of Celebes on one side, and that of Java on the other. It

is so imperfectly known, even by its own inhabitants, that many of the inland tribes have no notion that they are islanders, while to others a solitary stream is the whole world of waters. Sir Stamford Raffles spoke of Borneo as little more than a blank on the map of Asia. A large proportion of its surface still remains so, but new lines may now be traced around Kina-Balu, and in the regions hitherto unknown beyond Brunei. Even before he saw Borneo, Mr. St. John had been ambitious of climbing the mountain; he had aspired to be the first to stand upon its silent peaks; but Mr. Low, colonial treasurer of Labuan, was before him by seven years, and deposited a paper in a bottle within a few hundred feet of the summit. In the spring of 1858, Mr. St. John, with Mr. Low for his companion, started with two servants, a crew of six, and seventeen followers. It was agreed to reach the base of the mountain by way of the Abai river, on whose banks the salt-makers dwell, the salt being boiled from the roots of the nipa palm, which always grows in sea or brackish water. The nipa is, indeed, a little treasury of comforts to the natives. From its root the native extracts, as we see, salt; from its stem, sugar; with its leaves he contrives a roof for his house, and mats for the walls and for the awnings of his boat; he rolls his cigar in the fine leaf lining, and so on through a dozen other homely uses.

The party went slowly up the stream. On the way was seen a chief's grave, ornamented with sevenfold umbrellas. Thence the journey was continued on foot; visits were paid to great men, whose households displayed a sort of picturesque economy, and, as the distance from the coast lengthened, the travellers found themselves in a country where no European had hitherto been seen, so that if the region was strange to them, they were equally strange to the people. But it was no easy work to ascend barefoot the dry bed of a torrent in search of mountain pinnacles above the clouds. And what, the village folk asked, could these strangers promise themselves for their pains? Were they looking for gold or copper mines, or for the fruit of the tree lagundi, which, if eaten, restores youth and confers unending life; or, in the steps of Sadak, seeking the waters of oblivion? There was, moreover, a great diamond up there, and, in connexion with these stories, or Bornean romances, there being no Fadlaheen in the party, one of the men commenced a tale which lasted seventeen days in the telling, all about a princess who "for seven days and seven nights neither ate nor drank, but only wept." However, like the Arabian hero, the travellers pushed on. There was an occasional curse, with a menace or two, from the villages—menaces and curses being deprived of all evil results by an exhibition of revolvers. Presently the mountain began to show itself boldly at close quarters. Its fortress faces of granite towered in front, and over masses of rock, through thickets of shrubs, bright with blood-coloured flowers, the explorers scaled the peak. The air was light, buoyant, and exhilar-

rating. "It made me," says the narrator, "long to float away."

From the mid-slope of Kina-Balu many brilliant glimpses of unexplored plains, unmapped rivers, unransacked valleys, and villages unknown to the best maps, could be obtained. At nine thousand feet above the level of the sea the travellers slept in a cave. Above rose the peak. Now the peak itself—the very apex of the mountains—was what Mr. St. John desired to reach. He tried his best; he persevered until the rising ledge narrowed under his foot to eight inches. It was unsafe to go further; so he, from a more secure point, flung a stone to the summit, forty feet above him, which he could not scale, and turned him downwards, collecting plants by the way, to return through a storm to the friendly people of the highest village. There all the girls had washed their faces, and brought little presents of tobacco, in exchange for pins and needles. On the way back to Brunei, botanising a little, Mr. St. John, not confining himself to the gorgeous flowers, also took notes of sundry marvellous fishes, very like those in the Arabian tale, where "the fisherman, looking into the lake, saw in it fish of various colours—white, and red, and blue, and yellow." And it is curious that those which live in the brilliant water-world, among coral reefs, where the nautilus stand "at their diamond doors" in "rainbow frills," are singularly rich in tint and iridescence. There was one—emerald green, striped with rose, with adornments of amber and ultramarine—exactly suited for the dinner of a Calendar, or Sleeper Awakened, or a Princess of China betrothed to a monarch pavilioned with his hosts on the plains of Tartary. Glorious, indeed, is the face of nature in this land of birds of paradise, of scented beetles, coral snakes, the "sun-coloured" cinnys, the Indian lotus, the original tiger lily, the harp-shell—tinted like a tulip—and the only genuine mermaid, whose flesh none but kings may eat.

The travellers' first object was attained. The mountain had told its story. The river was now to be questioned. This river Limbang is the Nile of Borneo, whose sources in the far interior are yet undiscovered. The natives talked of it as a second Alp, the sacred stream which

—ran
Through caverns measureless by man,
Down to a sunless sea.

It rushed, they declared, through miles of natural tunnel; beyond, it meandered through a seven days' journey of smooth land, peopled by tame goats without masters; but no one had been among these goats, nor visited the watery caverns. However, Mr. St. John, in the spirit of the simple old voyager who began his narrative with "being resolved to survey the world, I sailed from Bristol," undertook to explore the Limbang for himself, and go from its traditions into its geography. Two boats were equipped; the crews were armed; hatchets, yellow, black, red, and white cloths, looking-glasses, agates, and beads were taken in stock to propitiate the savages, and in August, 1858, a start was made.

Away, past a burial-ground of chiefs, where gold ornaments are found, either in the earth or among the prawns in the river, past the stony relics of ancient Brunei, past rafts of palms, and through a connecting channel into the Limbang river. Thenceforward, no Malay dwellings were seen; the Bisayans, the Muruts, and a few Kayans occupied the sprinkled villages. It was a fatiguing but an interesting journey, with forest fare of the best; for Mr. St. John travelled with a cook who could make salads as he ran of cucumbers and chillies, of prawns and curry, or contrive curries finished in the orthodox way with cocoa-nut milk. The navigation was not only difficult but perilous, and the weather intensely disagreeable. In the woods, overhanging the stream, hideous green snakes were pendent; hornets infested the air, and stung fiercely; leeches clung to the explorers, legs, when they landed on the swampy shores. But they continued their adventures on foot, with provisions failing and men discontented. In the valley of the Limbang the women make the tapioca from the starch of the bitter cassava, cut into slices, dry its poison out and pound it into meal. The strange tribes, the singular village life, the legends of the elders, the manners and customs of a new race, the brilliant flowers of this wilderness of the Sun Garden, the sport, the scenery, and the promise of a glimpse of Larvi, a mountain of mystic fame in the far interior, occupied the minds of the travellers. A month was spent on the road, however, and Larvi was not reached. Still, the course of the Limbang, for a considerable distance, was determined.

On his way back to Brunei he heard some fearful and wonderful stories about the orang-outang, the wild man of the woods. It had frequently been asserted that young girls were carried off by these poor relations of his lordship the gorilla; but here we have a tale about a monstrous female orang-outang who, taking a fancy to a poor Murut gentleman whom she saw bathing, dragged him by force to a tree which she compelled him to climb, lodged him in a warm nest, watched him with feminine jealousy, fed him with fruits and palm cabbage, and forced him to travel from one branch to another instead of treading the ground. The tale is a tragedy; for the ungrateful Murut not only ran away at the first opportunity, but afterwards shot the forest syren with a poisoned arrow.

Forest travel in Borneo, then, was not altogether a luxury; nor was it monotonous. A mile an hour is the rate of progress under ordinary circumstances. With all exertion, Mr. St. John never recorded more than ten miles' progress in a day through the thick pathless forests, and that was a day of ten hours' hard incessant work.

As for the sultan to whom Mr. St. John was accredited, his is a Malay kingdom, one of the few which have not fallen. He keeps a constitutional court in the Oriental sense of the term, and his capital is styled the Abode of Peace. He is surrounded by an aristocracy—

filthy, proud, and poor. The court of Borneo has also its fashions. There is, for example, a fasting month, at the end of which the sultan and rajahs go in gay procession to cleanse the graves of their ancestors. On the last day of the said month, everybody begs pardon of everybody else for the short-comings of the preceding year. Then they have professional story-telling, and lady conjurors. All this is of the East, Eastern. But there is no real government, no army, nor fleet, nor police; no regular punishment for crime. But Borneo is rich in coal-fields yet to be developed. There is intelligence in many of its native tribes, and the future lies not without hope before it.

Sarawak, the territory of Sir James, or Rajah, Brooke, has been more precocious. It has, with its present dependencies, a coast range of three hundred miles: it is nobly watered; it has an excellent soil; and its productions are valuable. Not many years ago, the visit of a schooner was an exciting event, whereas now an important commerce thrives in the rivers.

The Chinese are old visitors of Borneo. Chinese gardens and Chinese graves, are constantly to be met with. The Chinese, too, know where to wash for gold and diamonds.

Mr. St. John voyaged twice to the neighbouring islets of the Sulu Archipelago. Cayagan Sulu, with its three peaks, its jasmine-scented hills, and lawn-like sward, opened the gate to Sulu Proper, where an Englishman lived, and where the sultan, in the midst of a turbaned, gold-brocaded, and gold-braceleted court, behaved very like a gentleman, asking, in an approved coffee-room tone, "Is France quiet?" In another island of the group civilisation had ripened early. There was a corner shop in the town whither a young lady, Gabriella by name, attracted all the wanderers of those seas. Country-houses, too, throw open their doors to strangers, inviting them to drink cocoa-nut milk, chocolate, or gin. Unluckily, the piratical hordes of the Indian Ocean still haunt the inlets of Sulu, notwithstanding the naval crusades of Spain and the Dutch. One of these marauders went to Mr. Wyndham, an English resident trader, and, in selling his brass gun to him, said, that since the English had been settled in Labuan there were so many steamers about that it was no use pirating, so he disposed of his brass gun, and retired from business. The occupations of the islanders are more harmless. They are great pearl-fishers. There was a chief, the friend of an English merchant, and this chief, being rich, gambled away his property, pawning his wife and children, and retaining only a little slave, with whom he started in a canoe to fish for pearls. They fished together, and the pearls, gradually increasing in number, began to fill their casket; which was a hollow bamboo. But one pearl for a long time could not be found. It was that which a man of old had once actually caught, when it slipped through his fingers into the water. The big, experienced pearl-oysters, be it known, are very watchful, and keep their shells open. Well, it fell out

upon a day that the slave boy, diving, hit upon the very pearl which had been lost; whereupon the chief redeemed his wife and children, paid off his debts, and became once more a respectable man. "It is a very curious superstition," Mr. St. John says, "in those countries, that if you place gold or pearls in a packet by themselves, they will certainly decrease in quantity or in number, and in the end totally disappear; but if you add a few grains of rice, the treasure is safe. I have never yet seen a native open a packet of gold, or pearls, or any precious stones, without noticing some grains of rice."

BOATING.

Our eager crew, six merry boys,
In the completest sailor trim,
Row, laugh, and talk with equal noise—
The shining eddies whirl and dim:
Beneath each oar an azure cup,
With sudden silver bubbling up.

The hinted summer thrills the scene,
Like a dear love-tale guessed, not told;
What flutter in Earth's youthful green,
What wooing in the sun's soft gold!
For Spring but just had passed away,
Veiled in her cloud of falling May.

Fresh'ning her sister's pathway first,
With scented dawns and showy eves,
Her lily-globes of perfume burst,
Spread her rich-lying tulip-leaves;
Her gold laburnum founts still shed
Some droppings on June's sunny head.

Alas! this bay of lovely nooks,
The boys, contemptuous, call a pond,
Bend on the helmsman anxious looks,
Assure him of dead calm beyond—
Yet loose the sail excitedly,
For he must turn the boat to sea.

And so before our vessel's prow,
In one grand line meet wave and sky;
Oh, this exuberant stir and glow,
The strength and the uncertainty
May well the boyish spirit win
To its own nature, so akin!

The glory of the setting sun
Rains down a dust of gold behind,
A cloud's cast shadow rests upon
The harbour rocks as moves the wind.
They gloom and glorify, a true
Magnificent dissolving view.

So we float on and on, then turn;
The boys reluctant furl the sail,
They see the beauteous waters burn,
But not the warning in the trail;
Steer for those rocks to see the cove
Called ours by right of trésor-trôve—

A tiny inlet out of sight,
And cool behind its rugged screen,
Filled with a curious pale-green light,
That ripples through the darker green
So calm, so clear, the emerald flow,
We see the starfish move below.

The seaweed, purple, olive, red,
It might a mermaid's garden be;
So saith a child, whose curly head
Is glassed in its transparency.

Falls but a drop from rested oar,
We mark it dimpling to the core.

Again, out 'neath a crimson sky,
With flashings of a ruby tide,
In white relief those seagulls fly,
Then a deep purple falletide wide,
The boys, enwrapt, repress their glee,
Hushed to unconscious poetry.

And, floating through the vivid maze,
That looks as liquid as the sea,
We think of ancient sacred days,
Of Jordan and of Galilee:

It broodeth like an Angel's wing!
Draw in thy oars! the boys must sing.

They choose, boy like, no plaintive hymn,
Nor suit the hour with quaint old song,
But, just aware of feelings dim,
Relieve them with a carol strong—
That floods, as with a storm of mirth,
The purple air, and sea, and earth.

Oh happy age! With quick rebound
Their very sighs come laughing back,
They catch their oars, 'mid jocund sound

The boat turns, dancing on its track:
One whirl of motion, song and glee,
Till we stand laughing on the quay.

PERPLEXING PARISIANS.

An orator may be made, we are told; but a poet is born a poet. We hear also of born actors, born painters, born engineers, and others; but we have not yet heard of a born policeman. Yet that phenomenon is not an unlikely form of nature's efforts. Distinction in the police career is not to be attained without peculiar and considerable talent, combined with great corporeal capability—if not of sudden exertion of strength, certainly of endurance. If some achieve policemanhip, whilst on others policemanhip is forced, we may assume, without great effort, that a gifted few are born policemen.

Such, at least, appears to have been the case with Canler, Ancien Chef de Sûreté. Although in sufficiently poor circumstances to sharpen his wits, he was not driven into the force by necessity; nor had he committed any peccadillo which, subjecting him to the censure of the police, thereby rendered him its slave. He came into the world on the 4th of April, 1797, an enfant de troupe, or child of his regiment. In 1801, his father, holding the rank of sergeant, was made provisional director of the military prison at Namur; which office he retained six years. As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined. The jailer's son never forgot the impressions received during his prison childhood. His youth was spent as a drummer and soldier, mixing him up with episodes of Napoleon's triumph, decline, and fall. After Waterloo, he married Made-moiselle Denisot, an egg-merchant's daughter, and soon afterwards got his discharge from the army, without a sou in his pocket, and with no trade to follow.

Accident, like Newton's apple, decided the object on which his talents were to be employed.

He tried to work as a paper-stainer, but found the occupation incompatible. One day, when going along the Rue St. Sebastian, he observed a crowd before a house. A lodger had discovered a thief in his room, who threatened him with a formidable knife, upon which the said lodger made his escape, double-locking the robber in.

This was the decisive moment of Canler's career. Rising equal to the occasion, he took the lead. He listened at the door. All was silent. He burst open the door. The cage was empty, the bird apparently flown. By intuition, he thought of the chimney, tore a bunch of straw out of a mattress, set fire to it, and was rewarded by the surrender of the thief; who went to the assizes, and was condemned to seven years' hard labour.

This adventure prompted the idea of devoting his life to the pursuit of malefactors. His offers of service were accepted (1829); promotion came in due time, concluding with his retirement in November, 1851. The natural consequence of his leisure is a volume of memoirs, written, he says, neither from the desire of celebrity, nor to make a market of the curiosity of the public; but through the wish to spread a knowledge of facts, which has been acquired by long practical experience; through the hope of saving weak-minded persons, by showing them vice as it is—ugly, low, ignoble, repulsive—with the belief, in short, that he is fulfilling a duty to society, by describing events in which he has been an actor or a witness, as a warning to the rising generation. His sole object is to caution honest folk against the tricks of malefactors, and to prove to the latter that, sooner or later, their machinations are sure to be found out.

A preliminary word on the French police, as an institution, may be useful. The préfet of police can order individuals, without trial, to leave Paris summarily or within twenty-four hours; and he can set at liberty convicted prisoners as a reward to other criminals who have given valuable information. He can arrest, at one haul, a score or two of ill-reputed persons, on the chance of catching some real offender; can keep them while he wants them; can set them at liberty at his pleasure. He can spy out the most trifling actions of anybody, without exception, the highest as well as the lowest of the land, and can act as seems good to him in consequence. If he guesses that any new branch of criminal art or immorality is started, he can set on a secret agent, with liberal pay, for the gratification of his own personal curiosity. He can cause people's rooms to be searched for political papers, in order to obtain possession of private documents whose existence inconveniences his protégés. It is not surprising that, with these and other powers, police functionaries (who began, some without a sou, others with debts) should have acquired, in six or seven years, fortunes of from fifteen to five-and-twenty thousand pounds.

It was the police, diverted from their proper employment and occupied with fulfilling the

schemes of the Jesuits, who ruined the Bourbons of the Restoration. Provocation, that base and perfidious instrument, was established into a permanent system, both to extort harsh laws from a good-natured monarch, and to repress individual or public opinion. Honest workmen, enticed into public-houses by men professing to be their fellows, were excited, under the influence of drink, to express opinions adverse to the government, ending by blaming the king himself. The next step was to desire a radical change, and to agree to take part in a pretended plot. Amidst the fumes of wine and the clash of glasses, a patriotic compact to that effect was signed; immediately after the "agents provocateurs" disappeared, to present the treasonable act at the préfecture of police. The wretched dupes recovered from their orgies to find themselves in prison.

Louis the Eighteenth, taught by the experience of exile, ascended the throne with the firm intention of taking count of the new ideas which had sprung up in France. Unfortunately, he was surrounded by persons whom the Jesuits had inspired with the hope of regaining their ancient privileges by means of absolutism and the right divine. They organised the faction of "The Congregation," which formed a secret retrograde government in correspondence with every court in Europe. They fomented conspiracy after conspiracy, to frighten the king into annulling the Charter and re-establishing the old régime. Letters, even of ambassadors and ministers, were violated; for the Jesuits succeeded in putting tools of their own at the head of both the police-office and the préfecture of police. Hypocrisy became the order of the day; the policemen highest in favour and best rewarded, were those who took the sacrament frequently, went to confession, and acted as spies on their superiors. It is a wearisome task to follow their long and subterranean intrigues, often ending in bloodshed—witness the fusillades of the Rue St. Denis, which were the fruit of a make-believe insurrection got up by a convict. The end was the departure of Charles the Tenth.

The Police of Surety, of which M. Canler rose to be chief, dates no further back than 1817. Such a police should be completely distinct from a political police; and its special office ought to make it irremovable in the midst of revolutionary changes, for the very reason that its duty is to watch over the security of life and property. Conducted in this spirit, no one can dispute its utility, nor call its necessity in question. When not diverted from its real object, far from deserving the scorn frequently heaped upon it, it is entitled to the gratitude of honest men. Its veritable mission is to ensure personal safety, and the subordination of evil to good, by handing over criminals to justice. Without this guarantee, what would become of society? In what a condition would the world be, if everybody were obliged to protect himself, unaided, against every attempt that might be made on his purse, his honour, or his life? What a state

of things if the public had to baffle, as it could, the schemes of villains to whom the property of others is a constant temptation, and the art of thieving an incessant study!

Nevertheless, the agents of the Police of Surety were long regarded with an evil eye. Disgust and loathing were the only sentiments felt for them by the citizens whom they were deputed to protect. The cause lay in the origin of the force. Vidocq, the first chief of the Brigade of Surety, had risen to that post by detestable means. He had often acted as an informer; and when threatened with imprisonment in a bagnio, discovered, in the baseness of his heart, a means—not of regaining his liberty, but of alleviating his position. He offered M. Henry, the chief of the second division of police, to make himself useful as a prison spy; to gain his comrades' confidence for the sake of betraying it; and to supply information respecting escaped convicts. Through his agency, several dangerous robbers who had infested the capital, were arrested; for which service he received money rewards, varying with the importance of the case. Finally, M. Henry set him at liberty, on condition that his services as informer should be continued, and that he should supply the police with a number of offenders (whose minimum was fixed) every month, under pain of being sent back to Brest himself. He was allowed four pounds a month, fixed salary, and a premium on every arrest effected through his means.

One of the first was that of a tanner, who had afforded him an asylum when he came out of prison, and whom he accused, truly or falsely, of coining. The tanner and one of his friends, a medical man, were condemned and guillotined, in return for their hospitality. To make up the required number of victims, he had recourse to the arts of provocation, and by that means ignobly thrived, until the return of the Bourbons. He then thought that he would make a better thing of it by placing himself at the disposal of the dominant political party. When no one else could be found to pull down Napoleon's statue from the column in the Place Vendôme, Vidocq, with a gang of ruffians, displaced it with a rope tied round its neck. After this exploit, he looked down upon the Surety Police, devoting himself almost exclusively to politics.

But in 1817, when the political ferment of 'fifteen and 'sixteen had a little subsided, Vidocq was entrusted with a dozen policemen of his own kind, to hunt out criminals; and it was not until then that he was really the chief of the Brigade of Surety, which, in 1821, was increased to twenty-eight men, with an allowance of secret-service money, of which very little account was rendered.

One single instance of his mode of selecting his subordinates will give an idea of the rest of them. An unknown person, calling himself Jacquin, came to Vidocq's office to offer his services as "indicator"—that is to say, spy, denouncer.

"What can you do?" asked the man of police.

"A good many things!" replied the candi-

date. "In the first place, I can buy things cheap. Only try me."

"Ah! very well. Take these two five-franc pieces, go to market, and bring me a couple of fowls. I shall see what sort of choice you make."

The new comer promised to be soon back again. In a very short time he returned, and delivered to Vidocq a pair of irreproachable pullets, as well as the cash he had received to pay for them.

"Capital!" said the great man. "But how did you manage?"

"In this way," answered Jacquin. "I borrowed of one of my friends, who is an under-cook, his linen smock, his cotton cap, and the basket he slings over his back. My basket was furnished with plenty of straw, and I half filled it with stones to give it weight. I bought six sous-worth of vegetables which I laid on the top. Further on, I paid my court to a poultry-woman, bargained for my fowls, and paid her the money. The basket being heavy, I kept it on my back. I was not going to have the trouble of taking it off, to put a couple of fowls into it; so I begged the good woman to pack the goods herself inside my wicker receptacle. Cooks and poulterers cannot help giving each other a hand's turn now and then. I stood facing her, as was the lady's due, and stooped a little. Her two hands were employed over my head, while mine were at work in her great front pocket. It certainly is a funny fashion of theirs to carry their till in front of their stomach! I easily got my own money back, besides this thirty francs-worth of loose silver."

"Do you often make a haul like that?"

"One does one's best," the other replied.

"A modest answer. 'Twas not a bad trick. To-morrow I'll find you some employment. Be off, and don't get caught between this and then. By-the-by, how often have you been in prison?"

"Never. I can't say that I have any experience in that line. I have managed hitherto to keep out of scrapes. Further, I don't pretend to say."

Jacquin went about his business. While he was explaining to Vidocq the way in which he had picked the poultry-woman's pocket, he had been very demonstrative in gesticulations. He had suited the action to the word, stooping and going down on one knee, to represent the scene more vividly. With all deference he had once or twice touched his catechiser, and he contrived to rob Vidocq of a handsome gold watch with heavy appendages. Jacquin (supposing that to be his real name, which is scarcely probable) never made his second appearance. Vidocq, whose rage and wounded vanity were excited beyond expression, moved heaven and earth to find out the clever thief; but they never traced either watch or Jacquin. Many years after the event, neither agent nor "indicator" dare pronounce Jacquin's name in Vidocq's presence.

In 1827, Vidocq left the Brigade of Surety with a considerable sum, which was *not* saved

out of his salary. A préfectoral decree, of the 15th of November, 1832, dissolved the brigade. A second decree of the same date, reconstituted it on a different basis. The third article enacted that no individual on whom sentence had been passed, even for the most trifling offence, could belong to the service. The measure was salutary; but there was one result to be apprehended. Vidocq's agents, suddenly deprived of the means of existence, might take to their former line of life; and it was indispensable, at any price, to prevent these scarcely half-reformed men from resuming a course of crime. It was therefore decided that they should retain the title of indicators, and should be allowed a room of their own to meet in; and that, besides a salary of two pounds a month, they should receive a gratuity for every criminal they caused to be arrested. Fourteen only of the body accepted these terms.

M. Canler classes the thieves of Paris into twelve different categories, of which the upper half-dozen (they are not numerous, M. Canler never knew more than twenty), called *la haute pégre*—condescend to rob not more than twice or thrice a year. But their labours are always very productive. Their favours are confined to jewellers' shops, money-changers, the offices of legal gentlemen, and the apartments of wealthy persons. A member of *la haute pégre* is an elegant young man of distinguished manners and fascinating conversation. He is at ease in the best society, conducting himself with dignity and grace. With inexhaustible patience and untiring perseverance, which would be admirable if exercised in an honest cause, he lays out for an affair, months beforehand. He meditates, studies, and ripens his plan. He admits of no confederate, and never attempts to commit his robbery until he is certain of security and success. These Corinthians, therefore, often enjoy a long career before they get finally sent to the galleys. One famous fellow, *Piednoir* (Blackfoot), never put his hand at all to the twenty years' hard labour to which he was twice sentenced during his regretted absence from the court of justice.

The sixth category consists of *scionneurs* or *escarpes*, who, with violence and sometimes murder, rob any well-dressed person whom they meet in the public thoroughfares after midnight. Hiding behind a corner or under a doorway, they spring out upon their victim. These night-hounds always hunt in couples. One seizes the passenger by the throat, closing his mouth with his hand, while the other strips him of his valuables and sometimes of his clothes. This done, the robbers disappear, leaving the plundered man half-strangled on the pavement. On the bank of a canal, matters are still more serious. The *escarpes* hide behind trees, heaps of stones, or piles of timber. At the approach of the first respectable-looking individual, one *escarpe* accosts him, under pretence of asking the time, or his way; the other passes a twisted handkerchief round his neck, and so contrives to hang him over his (the highwayman's) own

shoulders. The operation completed, whether the patient be dead or give signs of life, it is all one; he is summarily pitched into the canal. Next day, when the body is found, people believe in a suicide or in an accident, the result of intemperance. The habits and resorts of the escarpes are what might be expected from such monsters. Like wild beasts, they prowl by night, and hide themselves during the day. Happily, the species is diminishing, with a tendency to disappear. Their number never much exceeded sixty; the arrest of fourteen put the others out of spirits. One of these, Fournier, was executed; fourteen went to the galleys. There remained only forty-six to make midnight walks in Paris agreeable.

The eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh categories are almost exclusively monopolised by Israelites. Under pretence of making purchases in jewellers' shops, they steal unset diamonds, by means of a little bit of birdlime in the palm of the hand, and will even swallow them as one way of concealment. Or, one of two confederates will feign epilepsy, frothing at the mouth through the instrumentality of a bit of soap—during the confusion, the other will appropriate what pleases him best. M. Canler asserts that, as a general rule, the thieves who exert the most prudence and perseverance in the attainment of their ends belong to the stock of Abraham, and also that, in certain Jewish families, theft is a hereditary profession—a means of existence taught by the parents, and carefully studied by the children, under the maternal eye, and guided by paternal counsels and experience. One of these families, composed of father, mother, six daughters, and six sons-in-law, could boast within their own domestic circle an united sentence of two hundred and nine years of judicial condemnation. The head of the house exercised, besides, the lucrative employment of receiving stolen goods. Nevertheless, though from theft to murder there is only one step, Israelite thieves very seldom become assassins. Moreover, they never confess a crime, however overwhelming may be the proofs against them; nor do they make revelations, or denounce their accomplices.

The number of individuals belonging to the twelfth category, *la basse pègre*, is incalculable. Every day it is joined by new proselytes. These are the small fry who thrive in shoals, the scum of the caldron, the mob out of which great criminals emerge. Their tactics are as diverse as their body is multitudinous. There is the over-coat theft. This thief enters a public-house where people are playing at billiards. He hangs up his shabby surtout by the side of the best he can fix upon; then, when its owner is busy with his game, he slips out with the better garment, leaving the old one in its place. His profits are consequently calculated by the rule of subtraction. If caught in the fact of exchanging, he politely apologises for the mistake. The same manœuvre applies to hats and umbrellas.

There is the cobbler's-wax thief. An individual enters a restaurant where the spoons and

forks are of real silver, seats himself alone at a table, and orders his dinner. The repast ended, by way of grace after meat, he fastens a spoon or a fork under the table with wax or pitch, pays his reckoning, and coolly retires. As he rises, a confederate takes his vacant place, dines, and, before leaving, pockets the article so ingeniously suspended by his colleague.

We often say, "Proud as a peacock;" we might say with equal truth, "Proud as a thief." The thief is as proud of his evil deeds as the soldier is of his victories. He boasts of his exploits, and delights to talk to his co-mates of the onslaughts he has made on society and property: of his successes, and the modes employed to obtain them. The glory of theft is his darling theme. Not only does he relate his own stratagems, but his enthusiasm leads him to prate of robberies which he only knows as the secret of others; and as he thus lets out both his own culpability and the names of his confederates, thieves' vanity is often the cause of a gang of from thirty to forty malefactors being brought to justice in a body.

It is terrible to know that, for the Parisian who has once been in prison, there is neither peace nor security afterwards, however well he may conduct himself. The laudable desire of regaining lost respectability is made the torment of Sisyphus. Extortion (*chantage*, in Paris slang: attaining the proportions of a frightful profession) pulls the victim down at every attempt he makes to rise, and often finally crushes him. Extortioners make a trade of hunting up people who would fain lead an honest life, and on whom they fasten as their lawful prey.

A carpenter, doing a good business in Paris, had, several years previously, been condemned to, and had undergone, five years' reclusion—French imprisonments are long—and had married in the country after he was set at liberty. By industry and economy he had saved sufficient to bring up his family respectably. Only, as liberated reclusionaries are forbidden to reside in the capital, he avoided company, never went to the cafés outside the *Barrières*, and walked about the streets as little as possible, for fear of meeting any of his former fellow-prisoners. Notwithstanding these wise precautions, and in spite of the change wrought in his countenance both by prosperity and time, he one day fell in with one of his ex-companions who was authorised to reside in Paris, and who, under pretence of renewing acquaintance, offered to treat him to a bottle of wine. The carpenter dared not refuse. Once inside the public-house, they emptied their bottle, and then a second; and when they rose to take their departure, the carpenter's friend proposed to accompany him home.

"No, I thank you," the other replied. "I have a great many business errands to do; besides, I must go to my timber-merchant's, which would make the walk a little too long."

"Well, at any rate, give me your address, that I may make a friendly call when I happen to pass your way."

"With all my heart! I live——" And the carpenter, giving a false address, turned his back on his former comrade. But the one was as cunning as the other was prudent. Suspecting the cheat, he dogged the carpenter home, unseen. Next day the jail-bird favoured the house with a visit, as unexpected, and about as agreeable, as the fall of a thunderbolt.

"I'll tell you what," he said, grinning at his old companion; "you played me a shabby trick yesterday. But I am a good sort of fellow and bear no malice. You see I am come to give you a call, all the same."

"Ah!" ejaculated the poor carpenter.

"Yes, but you have got on famously. Comfortable rooms; first-rate! You are a lucky chap. Why don't you introduce me to your wife? You'll allow me the pleasure of breakfasting with you?"

"Certainly. But—in short——"

"In short, what? Do you want to get rid of me again, as you got rid of me yesterday? Have a care! If you give yourself any airs with me, everybody shall know that we were schoolfellows (in prison) together."

The wretched carpenter turned pale. Under the influence of terror, he entertained his worthless acquaintance as well as he could.

Next day the same farce was played, with the addition of the blood-sucker's borrowing twenty francs; this loan was followed, on subsequent occasions, by loans of thirty, forty, fifty francs, and more; until the carpenter, driven to despair, played his last card, and went to M. Canler for aid and protection, at the risk of being arrested for rupture de ban, or infringement of exile.

After due inquiry, M. Canler laid the case before the préfet of police, who ordered the expulsion of the villain who victimised the carpenter, and granted to the latter individual permission to sojourn in the capital. A few days afterwards, M. Canler received the grateful thanks of his protégé. It is evident, our author adds, that *chantage* is all the more dangerous to society in proportion to the difficulty of preventing it, and that this abominable trade is a social ulcer which sometimes attains the proportions of crime.

The book swarms with instances proving that human treachery knows no limits, being kept in check neither by gratitude, *esprit de corps*, nor natural affection.

One P. was seriously compromised in an attempt to murder; but he hid himself so well that all the efforts of the police to discover him were fruitless. The case was in course of trial. The president of the assize court urged the préfet of police to do his utmost to effect this individual's arrest, because his presence promised to throw great light on an affair which was entangled and difficult. The search was renewed with redoubled energy, but with equal want of success. At last, the man's sister came to inform the police that her brother, for the last month, had been concealed in her habitation.

"You may imagine," she added, "that I

cannot afford to keep him for ever. It costs money to maintain him."

So it was agreed with the worthy sister to relieve her of her brother during the night. The house was surrounded by police agents, and P. was caught just as he was about to escape by jumping out of a window. So much for fraternal affection. As to filial love: A young man arrested for theft, "twenty-four years of age, well educated, of gentle aspect," indicated to a fellow-prisoner a capital job; namely, the murder of his (the instigator's) own father, who was clerk in a bank. This last personage, M. Canler avows, made him shudder from head to foot.

Can such things be, in a city calling itself the metropolis of the civilised world, the pioneer of science and art, the capital governed by the Eldest Son of the Church?

PAINT, AND NO PAINT.

THE recent revelations in a public court, of an artiste in what is said to be the art of enamelling ladies' faces, did not disclose any novelty. Those who remember to have seen the late Madame Vestris on the stage must have observed

that whiter skin than snow,

And smooth as monumental alabaster.

The covering which that lady is believed to have used during the later years of her successful career as an actress is said to have been composed of the oxide of bismuth—a metallic substance, triturated with rose or orange flower water, and delicately spread over the features. This pigment, which is a subnitrate, is called by the French *blanche de perle*, or pearl white, and tends to confer clear tints on a fading complexion. It has this little drawback: in a bad atmosphere it tarnishes, and, should the blooming wearer show her face in an atmosphere charged with sulphur, its hue is certain to be changed to that of a dirty quadron. A philosophic dowager, enamelled à la Vestris, once attended a chemical lecture at a fashionable institution, where her curiosity prompted her to bring her face into too close contact with water strongly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen. Suddenly she became black in the face.

Fluids for improving the complexion have been in all ages in favour with the fair. Cosmetics, in the various shapes of unguents and pastes, were patronised by the Roman ladies, and the word is derived from the Latin *cosmetes*: female slaves who attended dames of rank, and applied the perfumed preparation to their cheeks. Martial reveals a secret that Fabula, one of the most celebrated beauties of his day, was afraid of the rain, on account of the chalk on her face; and Sabella avoided the sun because her features were covered with white lead. Poppæa, the mistress, and afterwards the wife of the Emperor Nero, while indulging in baths of pure milk to soften her skin, introduced a paste which hardened on the face, and was in effect an enamel. As empress, she led the fashion, which was generally adopted by every wealthy lady in her own house, so that the domestic face became a common

phrase; and, according to Juvenal, the husband was rarely permitted to see any other. Indeed, it was the point of one of Martial's epigrams that a Roman lady of rank did not sleep with the same face which she exhibited to her admirers when awake. Some of the ancient nations were in the habit of pounding cedar and cypress with aromatic balsams and gums, and then spreading an infusion of the compound over the face, in order to smooth and beautify, as well as perfume the features on which it was laid. The Grecian ladies of old revived the vermilion of their lips by a pigment which was said to be extremely beautiful; and we are told that modern Greek belles imitate their ancient statues by gilding their features on their wedding-days, a practice which they fancy confers irresistible charms.

Few articles produced by modern skill for the refinement of the complexion are more sought for than emulsions and milks, which are generally produced from nuts, and the milky appearance is due to the diffusion of their oil through the water. In the milk of roses, oil of almonds and otto of roses are the chief ingredients, and, applied to the most delicate skin, it is as grateful and as harmless as an April shower or the verdure of spring. Toilet rouges were long in vogue, but they have now been in a great measure superseded by carmine, a preparation of cochineal, which forms a beautiful pigment in every respect superior. Cochineal is procured from the female of an insect, and is brought principally from Mexico and Brazil, where it feeds upon, and derives its colour from the leaves of the Nopal plant after its fruit has ripened. The French carmine is said to owe its superiority to the same cause which renders the flowers of France so much richer in perfume than those of our colder and more cloudy climate,—the influence of light on its formation and precipitation resulting from the clearer and more sunny sky of the south. The colouring matter of cochineal, when spread on thick paper and dried very gradually, assumes a beautiful green tint, which, being moistened with damp cotton wool, and, applied to the lips or cheeks, produces a roseate hue. The theatre rouges are prepared from Brazil-wood lake, and from the safflower, which grows wild in some Eastern countries; the flowerets being of an orange colour, becoming red when dried. They contain a colouring matter known as carthamite, from which delicate rose-colours and rich scarlet are produced, and from this also the pink saucers are prepared. Cotton wool and crape similarly coloured are used for the same purpose, the former under the name of Spanish wool, the latter as *crépon rouge*. The sympathetic blush is produced from a chemical substance called alloxan, which was discovered by Liebig, and is in itself colourless. By exposure to the air it becomes oxydised, and, gradually turning to a deep rose-colour, stains the skin pink, and creates the most beautiful tint as yet introduced into the toilet of fashion. Alloxan is an animal product, and it is not, perhaps, expedient for the delicate beauty who is embellished by it to

inquire too minutely into its source. Few fainting belles are, perhaps, aware that the most reviving smelling-salts are produced from most offensive substances. The chemical name is ammonia, originally derived from the temple of Jupiter Ammon in Lybia, where it was first made; but it is now produced in England from bones and from coal-tar, the refuse of gas-works. The expression of Hamlet,

To what base uses we may return!

is here reversed, for the vilest garbage supplies to the gold, silver, and crystal cases of fashion an exquisite and reviving perfume. Ladies of high pretensions have been in the habit of obtaining a most delicate tint for the complexion by steeping the finest pale pink satin ribbon in the best eau-de-Cologne, and applying it to the cheeks. The most innocent and approved preserver of the skin is impalpable rice powder—*poudre de riz*—used after rubbing the face over with cold cream, which is itself commonly made with almond oil and equal proportions of the purest wax and, spermaceti, perfumed according to fancy.

There is a strong sympathy between the functions of the skin and the vital organs, and the true mode to improve the complexion is to preserve and improve the health. Perfumes, from their cheering and exhilarating influence on the nerves and the mind, are invariably used in all the artificial preparations which have been devised to beautify the face. The volatile, invisible, and evanescent particles of fragrant and odoriferous substances so agreeable to our sense of smell, are so minute that it is said a single small portion of musk has been known to emit in one day fifty-seven millions of atoms within a radius of thirty yards, filling the entire room without any sensible diminution of its weight. The expression "I do not like musk," has become fashionable, but musk was once a very favourite perfume; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of Napoleon, the Empress Josephine was so fond of it, that although forty years have elapsed since her death, modern authors assure us that the present proprietor of her favourite residence, Malmaison, with all his efforts, has not been able to remove the scent from the rooms. Odorous ointments, preserved in bottles made of alabaster, onyx, and glass, are constantly found in the tombs of the ancient Egyptians, and we are informed that one of these now at Alnwick Castle contains a perfumed substance, which, after more than three thousand years, still retains its scent. Moore poetically alludes to this singular retentive principle:

Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled,

You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,

But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

Flowers as they go out of bloom still retain their odour, a property which did not escape Shakespeare:

Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made.

As many of our fair readers may have flowers

at command, the following simple process, recommended by Mr. Piesse, of New Bond-street, will concentrate and preserve those odours.* The flowers must be gathered with as little stalk as possible, and then placed in a jar three parts full of oil of sweet almonds, or the purest Lucca olive oil. After remaining twenty-four hours steeped they are to be squeezed in a coarse cotton cloth, and fresh flowers added to the oil, and this repeated from day to day until the required perfume is procured. When the oil is considered sufficiently saturated, it should be mixed with an equal quantity of the purest and strongest rectified spirits to be obtained at the chemist's, and the jar or bottle containing the mixture well shaken every day for a fortnight, when it may be poured off quite bright and highly charged with the odoriferous principle. When only one kind of flower is used, the quantity required to produce a highly scented oil, is considerable, but the amateur experimentalist can scarcely hope for any but a mixed, or, as the French term it, "mille fleur," or thousand flower perfume, in which the scent of the peculiar flower most abundant may prevail.

The preparation of cosmetics was at a very early period even in England combined with that of perfumes. A very curious and scarce book was "Imprinted in London" in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth, A.D. 1560, "The secrets of the reverend Master Alexius of Piemount, translated by William Warde," and in its quaint pages will be found a variety of secrets, and amongst them several "for making a natural white skin," and "making the skin fair and bright," in which oil of almonds and rose-water would seem to be the favourite ingredients. The modern perfumer will there find directions for preparing musked and odoriferous soaps with dentifrices or rubbers for the teeth, and pastiles; all of which must have been in use three centuries past. We have secrets for "waters to beautify the face" and "to make people look young and to make a goodly lustre for the face, good for ladies and dames," and "an ointment for the face which altereth the skin and reneweth it finely." One of the secrets may amuse our fair friends; and, although we do not vouch for its efficacy, we venture to predict that the experiment will not be attended with injurious effects. "Take a great lemon, and make a hole in the top of him, through the which hole, you shall take out of the substance within the bigness of a walnut, and fill it again with sugar-candy, with four or five good foyle leaves, and cover it again with the piece that you take off, sowing it with a needle, so that it may remain fast on. Then set the sayde lemon to roste upon the coales right up, and after as it shall begin to roste or boyle, tourne it often, until it hath sweate a good space, then take it off. And when you will use of it putte one of your fingers into the hole that was sowed up, and rub your face with it with some fine linen-cloth, and it

will prove an exquisite thing!" We trust that those who make the trial may find it so.

Fashion has as yet forgotten to revive what were once favourite embellishments of beauty, patches of black silk covered with isinglass, an adornment so highly patronised as to obtain the name it still bears of court-plaster. These patches were artistically distributed on the cheeks and chin as foils to divert the eye from certain features, or as beauty-spots to attract attention to others. Pope, in describing the toilet of his favourite heroine, Belinda, thus alludes to them:

And now unveiled the toilet stands displayed,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid,
First robed in white, the nymph intent adores
With head uncovered the cosmetic powers.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white;
Here piles of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.

Addison, in the Spectator, describes two rival beauties of the day: "They were patched differently, and cast hostile glances on one another, and their patches were placed in different situations as party signals to distinguish friends from foes." Black sticking plaster was cut out into the most ridiculous forms and stuck on the face. Conceive a beauty displaying on her cheek, a hearse!—the coaches and six to which the belle gave her countenance, having been cut out in black plaister. Silhouettes of stars, flowers, hour-glasses, and even comical little demons were commonly sold by perfumers for face-patching.

Before we conclude, let us retouch the subject of paint; for the age of no-paint has not yet arrived. A streak of black under the eyes (borrowed from the land of Egypt) and the timidist idea of red may, to this day, be detected upon the cheeks of ladies, to whom no suspicion of enamelling need attach. When you see a pair of piquant eyes surmounting a faint blush under the half-veil now so fashionable, and which pretty black lace "fall" is not raised during a long morning visit, you may conclude that the pencil and tinting-pad have been at work.

RED-CAPE.

I AM by profession a tutor. Carefully educated, and of a studious disposition from the first, I had been designed by my father for the bar, but his commercial misfortunes, followed by ruin and death, had compelled me to leave the university without even the barren advantage of a degree. Fit to teach, and fit, as discerning friends unanimously declared, for nothing else under the sun, I was induced to apply such abilities as I possessed to the task of tuition. Having passed some years in this calling: now assistant master in a school: now "coach" to a party of young Oxonians or Cantabs reading through a vacation spent in Wales or Cumberland: I at length found myself in want of an

* See page 607 of our fifth volume.

engagement. None of my old pupils or surviving relatives could assist me in this strait, and I at last determined to apply to one of the more reputable of those agents who profess to facilitate both the obtaining of situations and the choice of competent persons to fill them. I paid my fees, was duly entered by name in some enormous ledgers, and for several weeks was a punctual caller at the office, which was near Oxford-street, but without success. I seldom visited Mr. Hudson's—this was the agent's name—without seeing other applicants, sad-eyed and dejected, sent empty away. And I began to regard the whole system as a snare and a delusion.

"I will call yet this once," said I one muggy autumn day, as I turned into Oxford-street with my umbrella, "yet this once, and if the usual answer is returned, I will trouble Mr. Hudson no more, but will accept the post of usher in that school at Northampton."

The office was empty of all but the clerk, posted behind his monstrous books, in a sort of mahogany cage. Of him I made, though with little hope of a favourable answer, the customary inquiry; "Anything for Mr. Edwin Kirby?"

"Kirby," said the clerk, rustling the leaves of a ledger, and referring to the Ks, with an irritating pretence of never having seen me before: "Kirby—Edwin, I think you said? Was it Edwin, or Edward?"

I nearly lost my temper at this. I had besieged the office for weeks, and here was this man, not merely forgetting me, which was pardonable, but talking as if he had a legion of Kirbys—not a very common name—entered on his books. Very opportunely his employer, who lay ensconced in some hidden recess, like a human spider, intervened.

"Don't worry the gent, Druce. I told you I'd see him when he called, and I've got something for him."

Mr. Hudson came wriggling out from his den, rubbing his hands and congratulating me with a warmth which seemed to savour of surprise. Perhaps it was not every day that the wealthier portion of the public consulted the office as to the filling up of such posts as they had to bestow.

"This is bonny fide, mind," said the agent, holding up a dirty forefinger. "I've as good as fixed the gentleman for you, and you can have an interview any day before three, at Ducrocq's Hotel."

"Ducrocq's?" repeated I, rather puzzled; for I knew the hotel to be a fashionable one, chiefly patronised by foreign visitors to London, whose rank or fortune made them shrink from Leicester-square.

"Yes; the party is a foreign party. Rich, I believe. He's a markis, and he wants a tutor for his only son. Salary's the only thing, Mr. Kirby, I can't tell you about; but I'll go to the hotel and introduce you to-morrow, if you like."

Mr. Hudson's information was accurate. The French gentleman in want of an instructor for

his only son was really the Marquis de Vauxmesnil, a rich landed proprietor in one of the central departments. The salary he offered was one which, had salary been my chief object, I should have owned to be liberal. The manner in which his tutor was to be treated at his château, was kind and handsome. I might have my own suite of rooms, M. de Vauxmesnil said, and dine alone or with the family exactly as I pleased. If I cared about riding, a horse should be at my disposal. My time out of school-hours, was my own. So far, so good, and indeed I had never dreamed of such privileges; but there were some things which puzzled me. The marquis was perfectly polite, and yet I was rather repelled than attracted by his courtesy. He was a tall and handsome man, in spite of his dyed hair; but there was a curl in his lip when he spoke, more like a sneer than a smile, and his voice had an imperious accent, as of one who had pampered his pride until it was a passion. There were traces of other passions, in the crow's feet and wrinkles about his keen dark eyes and firm mouth, and his complexion was so pale as to be colourless. Why had he come to England in search of a tutor? Why apply to an agency? Why, indeed, did he want a tutor at all, if his son were, as he told me, hardly eight years old: an age at which boys are generally left under female superintendence?

I am unskilful, I know, in hiding my thoughts. The marquis read them with ease.

"My dear sir," he said, taking snuff from a little gold box, which he handled with all the foppish grace of the old régime, "I see you are dying to know why I have come for a tutor to your foggy capital—excuse me—and whether I am what I profess to be, or an adventurer masquerading in the title of marquis. Reassure yourself. I am neither a Monte Christo nor a chevalier of industry. As to my wanting to place my child so early, under a tutor, that is my affair; it is my idea that education cannot begin too soon. As for my preference for an Englishman, it is briefly this—I cannot easily find a Frenchman of learning who is not imbued with horrible revolutionary principles, unless I take an ecclesiastic, to which course I also object. Therefore, I choose an Englishman, and prefer that he should teach my child your barbarous pronunciation of Latin—pardon me—than that Henri should learn to lisp the cant of the Jacobins."

All this, of course, was said in French, which I fortunately happened to be pretty conversant with; but it was an unknown tongue to Mr. Hudson, the agent. The marquis, however, found English words enough to inform my introducer that the result of the interview was satisfactory, and he begged me to favour him by leaving my testimonials with him for a day or two, until his final answer should be given. For my part, I was referred to a member of the French embassy for any information I might desire respecting the position of M. de Vauxmesnil.

I did apply in the quarter indicated, and all

the statements of the marquis were fully confirmed: with the addition that M. de Vauxmesnil had been a peer of France under the Orleans reign, and enjoyed the post of senator under the existing government.

"Ma foi! a superior man," added the young attaché, with one of those shrugs that say so much; "a man eminent in every sense of the word, but not of our century. There is no love lost between the government and M. de Vauxmesnil."

The political squabbles of France were no concern of mine, and I gladly closed with the liberal proposals of the marquis. During the journey to his country seat, which was on the banks of the Rhône, a short distance below Lyons, I had ample opportunity for estimating the character of my employer. He was a man who had had the irreparable misfortune to be born some hundred years too late, for his sympathies and tastes were wholly absorbed in a by-gone state of things, and his life had been spent in useless struggles to put back the hands of the clock of time. He was not precisely a bad man, but he contrived to do more harm and to provoke more antipathies than many who were worse than himself. He treated me well and civilly, but I could see that in his ideas there was a great gulf between us, never to be bridged, and that a Brahmin could as easily believe a Sudra his equal as the Marquis de Vauxmesnil could regard Edwin Kirby in that light. Once or twice I had my doubts whether I were doing wisely in burying myself in a lonely château in a foreign country; in turning my back, so to speak, on the nineteenth century, and becoming the stipendiary of an obstinate grand seigneur. But my prospects in England had been dark enough, and I had little choice.

"Welcome, M. Kirby," said the marquis, at last; "welcome to Rochemaigne!"

The train had just come jarringly to a halt at a small station. On the right hand, foamed the Rhône; on the left, shot up a sharp and jagged rock, rising to a point like the spire of a Gothic cathedral; and on a platform of this rock stood the castle—a very imposing structure, especially at a first glance. The village, with its grey stone houses and avenue of walnut-trees, nestled below; and the well-wooded and broken country on one bank, and the green meadows on the other, made up a pleasant prospect.

We quitted the train, and reclaimed our luggage. A carriage was waiting: not, as I had half expected, a coach and six, with triple file of powdered lacqueys: but one of those roomy shapeless vehicles, fitted with a light roof, and drawn by two long-tailed *La Perche* nags, commonly used by rich residents in the south. The coachman, in laced coat and flat cap, clambered on to a little pyramid of our portmanteaus and hat-boxes; the marquis's valet, who had been with him to England, climbed up beside him, and sat more comfortably on the box; the whip cracked, and we set off at a round trot. As we passed through the village many hats and caps flew off in honour of the rich proprietor, but I

saw few or no smiles of genuine welcome. M. de Vauxmesnil returned all these salutes affably.

"I am bon prince," he said, with one of his faint smiles. "So long as no idea-mongers come between us, my tenants and I get on reasonably well. What do you think of Rochemaigne?"

"Splendid!" was my involuntary exclamation. Indeed, from the point to which we had attained in our winding ascent, the old castle looked grand and majestic. On a nearer approach I could see that much of this splendour faded into nothing. Great part of the building was in ruins—a mere shell; the towers were broken, the walls breached, and the white modern house that clung to the shattered pile appeared smaller than it really was by contrast with its neighbour.

The marquis smiled bitterly as he observed my look of unconscious disappointment.

"Yes," said he, "Rochemaigne has seen its best days, like its master. Yonder, where you see the burnt beams, stood the gallery where the king—pshaw! what do you care for such old-world memories, monsieur? I dare say you would rather see a good dinner, now, than all the ruins on earth. So should I have thought, at your age. We are arrived."

My life at the château was somewhat monotonous, but decidedly not an unhappy one. The marquise, with the little boy, my pupil, and a sister of M. de Vauxmesnil, a quiet prim person, made up the family circle. Madame de Vauxmesnil was much younger than her husband—a pale gentle woman, with fair hair and kind grey eyes that had something mournful and timid in them. Very likely the match between those two had been made up, as French marriages often are, by busy relatives, and without much regard for the wishes and inclinations of poor Mademoiselle Louise. She was very obedient and subdued, not over cheerful, seldom well. The child, on the other hand, was really a noble little fellow, with chestnut hair curling in heavy natural rings, a clear healthy red and white complexion, and the frankest blue eyes in the world. A fine little fellow, with good abilities, so far as I could judge, and giving promise of a high spirit and a sweet temper—rare but enviable combination. It is not surprising that the little Henri—his father's christian names were Gaston Pierre Louis Armand Henri, after the fashion of the Faubourg St. Germain—was the idol of his parents, and that he stood as fair a chance of being spoiled as ever boy did.

There are some natures, however, which even flattery and indulgence seem unable to corrupt, and such was that of my little pupil the tiny viscount, as he had been called while still in the cradle: the eldest son of the Marquis de Vauxmesnil possessing that rank. His father wished his education to be conducted on as nearly as possible the system that had been in vogue before the Revolution. He did not, to be sure, insist upon my teaching the young heir the history of his native land through the medium of that voracious chronicle of the Abbé

Labeille, much esteemed in clerical schools, and which represents Austerlitz and Marengo as victories gained by a certain Marquis de Bonaparte, "general of the armies of the king." The scholastic works whose use were enjoined upon me were not such transparent traps for blindfolding the intellect. But they had been carefully selected, and were from the pens of men who viewed the progress of our age with fear and dislike, and who availed themselves of modern discoveries to hamper and embarrass the march of public opinion. The object of M. de Vauxmesnil was no secret.

"A gentleman," he used to say, "should not be ignorant of what is known to all the canaille of the cities. For my own part, I value your wonderful nineteenth century and its boasts, your steam, gas, and electricity, at less than a pinch of snuff. But Henri must not grow up unacquainted with all these material phenomena which it is the trick of the time to praise and to study. I was a page to Louis the Eighteenth, and we had something else to talk of then, than your science and your improvements. Gentlemen were gentlemen, in those days, my good M. Kirby."

Fortunately for me, the marquis had a high appreciation of the classics. The study of Horace and Cicero was to his taste, and had been sanctioned by the approval of the Grand Monarque, and he therefore encouraged his youthful son to devote much time to the dead languages. I say fortunately for me, because in helping little Henri through the Latin grammar, my way was clear before me, and I had none of the perplexities which beset me when natural science and history were under discussion. Then, indeed, my pupil often puzzled me by asking questions which it was hardly possible to answer in accordance at once with truth and with his parent's wishes. Children, when even moderately intelligent, have a restless curiosity and a talent for cross-examination, worthy of a procureur impérial; and Henri frequently perplexed me by pointed inquiries which it was scarcely within my power to answer or evade. The boy's nature was singularly frank and noble; there was a true chivalry in it, of which his father's disposition, with all its superficial gloss and glitter, possessed little or nothing. I felt assured that Henri de Vauxmesnil had only to know what was right, to act on that knowledge, without reference to sacrifice of self or prejudices. And I often thought with apprehension of the day when the young heir, arrived at man's estate, would find himself radically at variance with his father on some social or political question.

For, it was impossible that Henri should be always content to look at the broad noonday world through a pair of mediævally-tinted spectacles. Anything might open his eyes, any accident might reveal to him the actual condition of Europe, and enlist his sympathies on the side most opposed to the stubborn prejudices of his parent. As for myself, my position sometimes caused me considerable uneasiness. My own opinions were those which I shared

with the majority of my countrymen, of whatever class, and were naturally heterodox in the eyes of my employer. It would have been a gross breach of duty had I imparted to my young charge, facts and theories which his father abhorred; but, on the other hand, my conscience did not permit me to paint things in false colours—to blacken white, or whiten black. I tried to be neutral, to act a purely negative part, and for some time I succeeded tolerably well, but the effort was far from agreeable. Meanwhile, my little pupil became fond of his English tutor, and I had no cause to complain of want of kindness from any member of the household.

The Marquise de Vauxmesnil had not, I fancy, been consulted as to my engagement. She was always gentle and polite, but I imagined that she objected to me as a foreigner and a Protestant: while her husband more than once hinted that her desire had been that little Henri's education should be conducted by a priest.

"But that," said the marquis, in his sprightly way, "was out of the question. Certainly the Church is to be supported, but it would bore me frightfully to have a calotin under my roof, though my wife, poor dear creature, believes that every soutane covers an angel. No! I do not wish the boy to grow up awkward and silly, with a spice of cunning mixed with much ignorance. I am of the counsel of M. de Voltaire, himself a pupil of the Jesuits."

That was true. The marquis was an odd mixture of the eighteenth-century philosopher, and the political partisan of the Church. His speeches in the senate were bitter and violent, full of ultramontane feeling and spleen, but he made no pretence of being devout or even reverent when out of the tribune. He was an active opponent of the existing government; was often in Paris, where he used his whole influence for the Legitimist party; was constantly in correspondence with the exiled Bourbons, and always busy in weaving some cobweb conspiracy to annoy, if he could not overturn, the actual authorities of his country.

Life at the château was dull enough. A very few great people, who lived a long way off, would sometimes drive solemnly along the poplar-fringed roads, to dine at Roehaigue, to play old-fashioned games at cards, and discuss new events by the light of old politics. But there were not many persons left in the department who were considered worthy the honour of admission to the formal saloons of the Vauxmesnil family. Titled names, indeed, abounded in the province, but some fatal flaw attached itself to most of them. Such and such a count was ineligible, as a Bonapartist son or grandson of one of Napoleon's rough soldiers of fortune; this baron was an Orleanist; that baron was a flatterer of the imperial master of the Tuileries; while the rest were hobereaux or French squires, or were descended from pitiful farmers of the revenue, dishonest stewards, or wily notaries of the old régime. So, except the old Prince de Pontane, the Duke and Duchess of Rohan-Bournon, and four or five other families whose

nobility was as ancient as that of the Vauxmesnils, hardly any visitors crossed the threshold.

I was fond of sitting with my volume or my sketch-book, on the summit of the ruined keep, which commanded a splendid view. The elevation was considerable; the air, even in sultry weather, was generally, at that height, refreshed by a breeze; and it was pleasant to look down over the broad country, the distant mountains, and the wide river specked with barge and steam-boat. I was there, one day, with my drawing apparatus before me, and little Henri by my side, and the marquis was walking slowly to and fro on the terrace beneath—a favourite promenade of his—conning some speech which he intended to “fulminate” in the senate. The day was a peculiarly fine and bright one, with a brisk breeze stirring, and through the clear air the mountains looked nearer than usual, and showed new tints and fantastic forms of precipice and glen. I worked vigorously at my sketch, and the child looked on with his great solemn eyes. He was in an inquisitive mood that day.

“Mr. Kirby,” said the little fellow, “whom do those meadows belong to? There where the cows are grazing, below the vineyards?”

I told him to his papa, but was rather surprised when he rejoined:

“But the country yonder, across the river, towards those hills you are drawing, does not belong to papa, does it?”

I answered in the negative.

“And yet it did.”

“How do you know that, Henri?” I asked. I was surprised at the boy’s knowledge. My own had been gained from the accidental study of an old map of the estate, in which the confiscated possessions of the family had been carefully scored off with red ink. I was aware that the lands remaining to the marquis were but a fourth of the great property owned by his forefathers, but I had been careful not to arouse feelings of discontent in the child’s innocent mind by any hints on the subject.

“Old Pierre, the gardener, told me,” said the boy, looking forth into the distance. “Those were the revolutionists that took the lands away; the same who burnt the gallery and the chapel here, and made the castle so ruinous. Why did they do so, monsieur? Were they not very wicked men?”

It was an awkward question. How was I to explain to this child that feudal tyranny and court vice had brought about a dire retribution? How was I to tell him that there were faults—black and bitter faults—on both sides, and that the guiltless had suffered for the guilty?

But before I could frame a discreet answer, an eldritch laugh, harsh as the cry of the screech-owl, broke upon our ears, and made us both start. I looked hastily round, and so did Henri, for the sound seemed to proceed from among the ruins. To my surprise I caught sight of what seemed to be a human form; but so small and fantastically arrayed as

to resemble a huge ape rather than a woman. Yet a woman it was, dwarfish, bowed, and draped in a short red cape, blotched by stains of rough weather, and over which her long grey hair hung in tangled masses. A woman with a face hideous and wrinkled enough to have looked upon the wickedness and woe of a hundred years, but with bright malignant eyes in whose sparkle there was none of the bleared dimness peculiar to extreme age.

“I know her. I have seen her before—the Cape Rouge!” cried the child. Meanwhile, the old hag mopped and mowed, and shook her skinny finger at us, and mumbled out a cackling laugh.

“She is crazed, of course, poor creature,” said I. Though I spoke in English, and to myself, the old woman guessed my meaning, for her moans instantly changed into a shrill laugh.

“Ah! ah! Mon beau monsieur, you think so too, do you?” were the words that reached me. “Wait and see; wait and see. And you, pretty child, does the curse weigh on you, my—?” Here the lunatic, or whatever she was, ceased abruptly, and vanished so noiselessly and quickly among the ruins, that it almost seemed as if she had melted into air.

Next moment the stately step of the marquis was heard ascending the stone steps. I have no doubt the old crone’s ears had caught the sound some seconds before I did, and that the approach of the lord of the castle had cut short her warning or her malediction.

“The owls are noisy to-day,” said the marquis, taking snuff from his precious little bijou of a box.

The owls! Doubtless M. de Vauxmesnil had heard that strange cry without distinguishing that it came from human lips, nor did either the little boy or myself breathe a word regarding the weird figure in the stained red mantle.

I took an early opportunity of asking Pierre, the old gardener, the meaning of the apparition. The old man seemed rather disturbed by my question, for he leant heavily on his spade, and devoutly crossed himself, as he said, “Holy St. Catherine! Has *she* been here again. That bodes bad luck.”

“But who is she?” I asked, a little impatiently.

“Not know the Cape Rouge! Ah, pardon! I forgot monsieur’s quality of foreigner. Well, sir, they call her Red Cape because of the mantle she wears, but her true name is the Mère Chardon—Marie Chardon—and she lives in a little hut among the stones by the river, all alone. As for her age, who can tell it? I have heard my father say that when he was young the Cape Rouge always looked as old, and as wrinkled, and as grey as to-day. But, one thing is sure, her presence bodes no good.”

With some difficulty I elicited from the gardener that this old crone was believed to have been an eye-witness of the Revolution, and a sharer in its wild frenzy. She was reported to have joined in the dance of the Carmagnole around the scaffold at Lyons, when the

dismal guillotine was plied in the suburb of the Croix Rousse, until the knife was notched and blunted, and the headsman's arms were weary with hauling at cord and pulley, and the yelling mob had grown hoarse. She was mixed up, traditionally, with the attack and conflagration of the Château de Rochemaigne, and there were vague rumours of some great wrong that had been done to her or hers by a former seigneur of the castle, and which had been thus avenged.

"Certain it is, sir, that though the Cape Rouge hates all the noblesse, she hates our master and his family worst of all, and never speaks of the Vauxmesnils but with a curse. She has seldom appeared here, and never but as the precursor of sorrow, the saints be with us!"

I tried to laugh the old man out of his superstitious apprehensions, but in vain. He shook his head, and overwhelmed me with melancholy facts gathered from the storehouse of his memory. The Cape Rouge had appeared just one week before the younger sister of the marquis had sickened of a fever which carried her off on the very day fixed for the wedding. On the morning of the day when M. de Vauxmesnil's uncle, from whom he had inherited the title and property, was shot in a duel at Paris, the fatal red cape had fluttered among the ruins. And, again, when the great process was lost, by which the marquis failed to re-establish his fallen fortunes, and when the political earthquake happened which deprived the Vauxmesnils of place and power, the same evil-omened visitor had haunted the château.

That Pierre Ducosse, gardener, and ex-corporal in the Garde Royale of Charles the Tenth, should believe in the supernatural powers and malignity of the Mère Chardon, was not wonderful; but I was surprised to find that the priest of the village in some degree shared his opinions. This priest, M. Tonot, came often to the château, and was always welcomed, though less in his spiritual capacity than as a healer of bodily ailments. It is not unusual for a curé, especially in remote and poor places, to possess a smattering of medicine; and as the parish did not boast a doctor, M. Tonot's simple lore was in frequent request. There was a surgeon in a neighbouring commune, to be sure, and good medical attendance was of course procurable from Lyons; but the marquis had an odd antipathy to doctors—the "trumpeters of revolution," he styled them—and so the curé had to prescribe, alike for the feeble health of the marquise and for the infantine ailments of the young heir. I liked M. Tonot very well. He was a tall stout portly man, with a wholesome florid face, an honest common-place mind, and a deep quiet sense of duty. The poor were fond of M. Tonot, so were the children and dogs of the village, and Madame de Vauxmesnil always had a smile of welcome for him. But the marquis, who was kind to the priest in his way, mixed a good deal of contempt with his regard. Indeed, such an ecclesiastic as M. Tonot was hardly adapted to please M. de Vauxmesnil.

He was neither ambitious nor witty, neither a cynical jesting sprightly abbé, with poetry and the classics at his finger ends, nor a dark-browed ultramontane, cork-screwing his way to notoriety and a bishopric.

"Eh! You have seen her then, the unfortunate! Poor soul, she has suffered in her time, I fear, and no wonder that her temper is soured," said M. Tonot, when I questioned him on the subject of the Cape Rouge. "It is wonderful, monsieur, how accurately some of her predictions have turned out, sinister as they always are—for she bears no love to the family at the château."

The priest could tell me little more. Even Mary Chardon's age was unknown, the church registers having been burned at the Revolution. How she lived was doubtful, but it was known that she derived some support from the fears or from the pity of the peasants, though she never begged. She was no sham sorceress, such as are common in the French provinces, telling fortunes for a silver fee, and vending charms against mildew and blight, murrain and oidium. She had no living relatives, and none knew the cause of her vindictive spite towards the Vauxmesnils, though the old crone had been heard to mutter, "Blood for blood, tears for tears, sorrow for shame!"

"Old stories, monsieur; tales before the Flood," said M. Tonot, with a shrug; "but it is surprising how keen the old woman's scent is for any misfortune about to overtake the Vauxmesnils. You smile, monsieur. You are an esprit fort, I see: all you English are."

Time went on, and nothing occurred to justify these remarks. The weird figure was never seen again among the ruins during my residence at the château, and I began to forget it. M. de Vauxmesnil, though comparatively a poor nobleman, was owner of a good deal of property, which might have been worth much more had it been sensibly managed. On this head, however, his prejudices interposed. The métairie system was that which had suited his ancestors, and to this system he obstinately adhered, at a considerable loss of rental. The agriculture of his estates was singularly backward, progress made no way there, and new-fangled machines and modern breeds of cattle were discouraged. When the prefect of the department publicly congratulated the notables on the improvements that yearly took place, he could not deny himself the pleasure of a civil sneer at the ponderous ploughs, the ill-drained fields, and the gaunt coarse-woolled sheep on the Vauxmesnil property. But this censure on the part of a Bonapartist functionary was enough to confirm the marquis in his antiquated habits, and he politely derided all that I could hint on the subject.

In one matter the fancies of the marquis and his farmers went hand in hand; and this was the wholesale slaughter of small birds. The French tiller of the soil has a deep prejudice on this score; small birds, says Jacques Bonhomme, eat wheat, and peck grapes and cherries:

so death to them! And birds grew scarcer and scarcer throughout the province. But matters were brought to a climax, indeed, when a remonstrance was sent down from the ministry in Paris, with orders that the printed document should be affixed to the door of every mairie and chapel, and that the destruction of birds should be stayed. I read the paper, which was terse and good, and pointed out very forcibly what an important link in the chain of nature would be missing were the feathered tribes swept away from earth. The farmer was warned that in murdering birds he was fostering noxious insects; he was reminded that a few ears of corn, and a little fruit, were but a small makeweight to ricks burrowed by the weevil, and fields black with the fly; and that the tiny destroyers would harm his crops a thousand-fold more than ever the poor tomtits and chaffinches had done.

There were those who had the sense to listen to this well-timed appeal. There were more who gaped incredulously at the statistics, and let the nest-robbing and sparrow battues go on. But to the marquis such a piece of advice was gall and wormwood. *He* change his practices at the bidding of an usurping government! *He* receive good counsel at the hands of an imperialist minister of agriculture! He assembled his tenants, harangued them in a speech that came very close to sedition, and set himself to thwart the wise and kind designs of the authorities, with all the short-sighted malevolence of an ill-tempered child.

Such a massacre of birds as then took place the country had never known. The songs of the grove and meadow were silenced. Rewards were offered for the heads of lark and robin, thrush and wren, anything with beak and feathers. Gangs of birds'-nesters prowled through the woods, guns popped ingloriously all day long among vines and hedgerows, poisoned grain was thickly strewn about, until hundreds and thousands of dead birds lay stiff and stark on the inhospitable soil.

The usual consequences of such suicidal folly succeeded. There was a Nemesis of insect life, in the second year of my stay, which made the most obstinate farmer stare aghast at the countless legions burrowing, creeping, or winging their way to blight his hopes of profit. Grubs, caterpillars, flies, weevils, everything that crawls or flies, that bores the root or gnaws the bursting corn-ear, or cankers the blossom, or hollows out the fruit, everything that tunnels the bark or harms the wood of trees, everything that haunts the barn or the store, seemed gathered in hosts undreamed of. There were no birds to thin off the plunderers. Those faithful allies had been stupidly butchered. Their sharp-sighted little eyes and active bills would have done, for scanty wage, a hundred times more to stem the plague than all the hired labourers could do, with all their work of crushing and quick-liming, sulphuring and smoking. What with loss to grain, trees, and fruit, what with the cost of keeping down the pest by human agency, every cultivator suffered heavily, and the marquis found

his income and his popularity waning together. For, people began to regret the birds, and to blame the noble adviser who had urged their extermination. But the marquis was a dogged personage; he would not own himself in the wrong; he hired more and more men to dress the trees of his orchards, and he tried to make clumsy human fingers and toes do the work of the tomtit and the swallow.

On one sad afternoon in early autumn, while they were gathering the wreck of the fruit crop, little Henri begged for a walk in the woods. It was a dark hot lowering day; the air was heavy and dull; and the great masses of copper-coloured cloud that hung lazily in the deep blue sky, had a lurid tinge that threatened storm. All nature seemed oppressed beneath the menace of the gathering tempest, and the hum of the insects sounded sullen among the shrubs of the garden. I declined to accompany my young charge so far as the woods, but suggested as a compromise that we should repair to a certain hill-side orchard, where I knew the fruit was to be gathered that day. Thither we bent our steps, and, seating ourselves on a mossy bank close to the edge of the forest, which in that place bordered the cultured land, we watched the workers. It was a busy scene. Crowds of peasants: the men in blouse and striped nightcap: the women with broad hats of coarse yellow straw, crimson kirtles, and sabots of black wood: were swarming round the trees, filling baskets with red-cheeked apples and violet or yellow plums. But the fair promise of many a tree proved hollow and fallacious, the caterpillar and grub had been beforehand with the gleaners, and the men were more busy in killing insects than in piling fruit.

I took a book out of my pocket and began to read, giving Henri permission to join one of the groups of apple-pickers, in which old Pierre and his daughter, the blanchisseuse of the château, were employed. Presently I sauntered down to join the party, and found Henri, rosy with exercise, clambering into the upper branches of a gnarled old tree, the trunk of which he had scaled by help of a ladder.

"Hola, cher enfant!" I exclaimed, in some trepidation; "have a care, or you will tumble and hurt yourself."

"No fear, Mr. Kirby," cried the laughing child. "See those apples up above! I *will* pick them." And he pointed to a cluster of fine fruit on a lofty bough, while the servants clapped their hands, and applauded the courage of young "M. le Vicomte."

Plump! A great ugly caterpillar, dislodged by the boy's shaking the tree, fell upon my foot, and then another, and then another, a perfect shower of caterpillars. I picked one of them up. It seemed to be of a new species, and as I had commenced, in a humble way, the study of entomology, I placed it in a tin box to carry home. The peasants were less critical.

"Ah, the wicked beasts!" they cried; "it is they that spoil the apple-crop. Peste! there must be a regular nest of them aloft. Shake

them down, please, M. Henri, and we'll stop their pillaging."

The little viscount shook the bough lustily, and the insects fell in swarms, many of them dropping on his upturned face and bare neck; he brushed them off with a cry of dislike, but more fell next moment. The peasants, with their wooden shoes, soon crushed the fallen brood. A growl of thunder was heard afar off. I called to the child to come down, but it was not until he had gathered two of the apples that he would obey. When he descended he was flushed and trembling.

"Tiens, M. Kirby," said he, "can caterpillars sting? I feel as if I had fallen among the nettles, as I did last year. My neck smarts, and so do my hands, and oh, how my face burns!"

To my surprise I found the child's face and neck covered with dull red blotches, while his little hands were hot and dry, and he trembled like a leaf.

"My poor Henri, we must go home at once," said I, getting alarmed, while the quick natures of those around us broke out into loud exclamations.

The sky darkened fast, and a bright flash of lightning gleamed across the horizon, followed by the deep roll of advancing thunder. The poor little boy was in much pain; he put his weak little hand to his head, and moaned as he lay in my arms. He was getting delirious, or at least stupefied with the rapid progress of fever.

"Quick!" I exclaimed. "Pierre, help me to carry M. Henri home. The doctor must be fetched at once."

A laugh, as harsh as the croak of a raven, followed my words, and something red came rustling and glancing through the bushes of the nearest thicket.

"The Cape Rouge! The Mère Chardon!" cried the peasants, huddling together. Sure enough, the goblin face and dwarfish figure of the malignant hag, in her frouzy red cape, and leaning on her crutch, hobbled out from the screen of embrowned leaves. Her grey hair fluttered loose, and her eyes sparkled with hate and cunning. She lifted her crutch as if it had been the wand of a wicked fairy, and cried, in an ear-piercing voice:

"Ah! evil race of the Vauxmesnils! Brood of vipers with gilded skin! The curse works, does it? You who oppress and scorn the poor: you who robbed me of home and hope: you on whose heads lie my son's blood and my daughter's shame: you who even murder the little birds of the forest, blight and wither, old and young, till none of ye be left!"

Through the storm and through the rain and the hoarse roar of the tempest, Pierre and I hastily carried the helpless child home. As I looked half timidly back amid the gathering blackness and the fitful glare of the forked flashes, I could still see the figure in the red cape, with streaming grey hair and upraised staff, screaming out

unheard curses in the very rush of the tempest. I have seldom seen so painful a sight as the château presented, when the child was laid on his little bed. The sorrow of the mother was passionate and unrestrained, but I think it was still more distressing to mark the anguish of the stern proud father, callous to all the world besides. M. Tonot was sent for and came in haste, but could do nothing.

"If you will take my advice, M. le Marquis, you will send to Lyons for advice at once, and by telegraph. No ordinary physician will be able to deal with such a case. Send for Dr. Servans himself."

The marquis groaned, for the name of Servans was associated in the department with the most advanced principles in politics, and there had been something like a personal antipathy between the Legitimist noble and the Republican doctor. But he meekly obeyed, and I myself hurried to send off the message. A train left Lyons within the hour, and, in a few minutes after its arrival at Rochemaise station, the famous physician stood knitting his grey eyebrows by the bedside of the dying boy. He had never spoken since we brought him in. His eyes were half closed, and he did not know any one present: not the nurse crying at the foot of the bed: not the mother sobbing beside his pillow: not the hard and haughty father, never haughty or hard to him, who stood by, with unwonted tears in his eyes.

It was piteous to see the imploring eagerness with which the marquis scanned the face of his old enemy the doctor, trying to read hope there. Dr. Servans saw the pain and quivering anxiety written on the ordinarily impassive face, and his own shaggy brows twitched, and his rough voice was unusually gentle, as he asked the necessary questions.

"Had the child been stung by a snake? Well, then, had he eaten any berry, or herb, in the woods? Who was with him when it happened?"

"Mr. Kirby, the English tutor."

I gave a brief account of what had occurred. Dr. Servans saw light amid the darkness.

"The caterpillar—you say you preserved one, monsieur—let me see it!"

I drew out the tin box, and the doctor pronounced the insect to be a specimen of the rare and poisonous Bombyx processionea, whose touch, or even smell, is well known by naturalists to produce violent pain, inflammation, fever, and death.

Why prolong a sad tale? The great physician could do nothing.

Three blouse-clad men then came up, carrying on a hurdle something that lay still and shapeless, something in a tattered Red Cape. There was an awe-stricken look on the men's worn faces.

"Struck by lightning, you say?" cried the doctor. "Ah! I can do nothing here, my friends."

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